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Divinity School, Class of 1824

Captain Bickel

OF THE

Inland Sea

Captain Bickel on deck of new *Fukuin Maru*

Captain Bickel

OF THE

Inland Sea

By

CHARLES KENDALL HARRINGTON

Missionary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, in Tokyo, Japan

ILLUSTRATED

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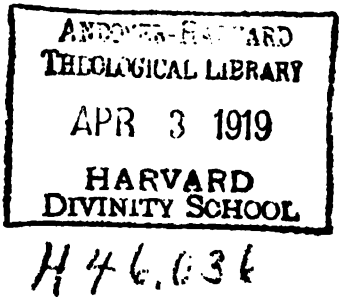

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Dedicated to

The Queen of the Cabin,
The Lady of the Little White Ship,

who made of the "Fukuin Maru" a Christian home, and through the good cheer and sunshine of that home gave to many of the Island Folk of the Inland Sea their first glimpse of the beauty and winsomeness of Him whose membership in the Holy Family, in Bethlehem and Nazareth, has sweetened and sanctified, for East and West, home life and family affection :: :: :: ::

"If we wish to bring help to a man we must be willing to pay the cost."

—CAPTAIN BICKEL.

"Is it worth while? The man who comes and mocks, the man who comes for rice, the Pharisee —is it worth while to spend a life on these? My God, my God, how could I doubt Thee? Take my life and use it to the last shred for whomsoever Thou wilt."

—CAPTAIN BICKEL.

"For, mark you, all love conveys the lover to the beloved. The very secret of love is self-impartation. Love can never content herself with the gift of things. Charity gives things. Love always gives herself."

—J. H. JOWETT, D.D.

Preface

IT was with no ordinary regret that I learned of the irreparable loss which the cause of foreign missions, and in particular our Baptist Mission in Japan, had suffered in the unexpected and, humanly speaking, untimely death of our beloved Captain Bickel. His rapidly growing work for the Islanders of the Inner and Outer Seas was not only the pride of our Mission, but a stimulus to every evangelistic enterprise in Japan; while to multitudes also in other lands the story of the Little White Ship was one of the most fascinating chapters of the modern Acts of the Apostles. Even to many who had only a moderate knowledge of foreign missions in general, the Inland Sea, the *Fukuin Maru,* and Captain Bickel, had become household words. But to me, who have known our Captain in the intimacy of his home, both ashore and afloat; who have sailed with him many weeks through the blue lanes of the Inland Sea, and have tramped with him many hours over the rough hill-paths of his Island parish, he was not only an ideal missionary, whom I held in the highest honour both for his own and for his work's sake, but a warm personal friend, on whose too early grave it is a privilege to lay this humble tribute of affection.

I trust that this all too inadequate account of the life and work of our Mariner-Missionary may

not only serve to keep alive the memory of one of God's heroes, one of nature's noblemen; but may awaken in the hearts of many a livelier interest in that foreign missionary enterprise which Christ has laid upon His followers as of paramount importance, and to share in which is the greatest adventure conceivably possible to the human soul.

C. K. H.

Sydney, Nova Scotia.
The Ides of March, 1918.

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God ruleth; then with anxious mien
  Why doubt and fear,
Since He in paths unknown, unseen,
  In love is near,

To counsel, comfort and uphold,
  Till gently as the dawn of day
His plans and purposes unfold,
  And light is shed upon my way?

—*L. W. Bickel.*

I

A GERMAN PATRIOT

ABOUT the middle of the nineteenth century, in that loose aggregation of kingdoms, grand-duchies, duchies, principalities and free cities which was later to become the German Empire, there was great political and social unrest. A widespread movement for reform was on foot, directed not only against the oppressive rule of the several kings and kinglets, dukes and dukelets, who happened to occupy the seats of authority, but also toward the amelioration of the unhappy political and economic condition of the country as a whole. To weld all these incoherent fragments into one broad Fatherland, in which a united German People should enjoy constitutional government and popular freedom, such as France, England and America had achieved; to add a Germany to the list of great, progressive, modern free nations, in which those who sat in high places should not be autocrats, nor those who toiled in lowly places serfs, was the lofty ambition which kindled the souls of the finest men of the German race. As was natural, and inevitable, it was among the choice young men, and especially among the students in the universities, that the patriotic fervour burned most ardently, and the discontent with things as they were which had long been smoulder-

ing throughout the nation flamed out into open advocacy of revolution.

But the German people were not yet prepared to carry a revolutionary movement to success. The demand for political union, for constitutional government, for democratic institutions, for the removal of the disabilities under which the common people laboured and the elevation of the peasantry from the condition of practical serfdom in which they were held, was bitterly opposed by the rulers and courts of the various kingdoms and principalities, to whom, after the fashion of such folk, the continued enjoyment of their little brief authority was of more moment than the welfare of a nation. Bismarck, that man of blood and iron, already secretly planning to erect a German Empire under Prussian hegemony, led the Prussian court against the popular demands, whether for a united or for a democratic Germany, and his hostility to the reform movement was copied in the other states. The heavy hand of government came down upon those who preached the revolutionary doctrines. Many were imprisoned. Others suffered the spoiling of their goods. Some sealed their testimony with their blood. Some escaped the edge of the sword by flight, exile the reward of their patriotism. Across the sea to the New World, to find refuge under the shadow of "Old Glory," came some of the choicest spirits of Germany, who by their ability and energy were to make a splendid contribution to the development of their adopted country, and to win for themselves position and influence. As notable instances may be mentioned Edward Retz, and Karl Schurz, of the latter of

whom it has been said that only the fact of his foreign birth stood between him and the highest office in the gift of the American commonwealth. It is of interest to note also, in this connection, the case of Hans Kudlick,—not a German indeed, but an Austrian,—who at the time of the revolutionary movement among the German States championed the cause of freedom and democracy in his own Fatherland, and brought about the liberation of fourteen millions of Austrian peasants from a condition of serfdom, but who also found it discreet to join the procession of emigrants to the New World, and who died the other day, in his adopted country, at the ripe age of ninety-four.

Among those Pilgrim Fathers of German blood who for love of the Fatherland were obliged to forsake the Fatherland, was the family of a certain well-to-do farmer of Weinheim, in the southern duchy of Baden, Bickel by name. The early forbears of the Bickel family had come of hardy mountain stock, with their home among the Tyrolian Alps. Thence, centuries ago, they migrated to what is now southern Germany and we next hear of them as the von Bickels of Bickelburg. There for many generations they held sway, father and son, as Barons of the Castle, holding the rank and enjoying the culture and training of feudal lords, down to modern times. Goodman Bickel, however, the father of the hero of this chapter, was no baron, but just a plain, hard-working, intelligent yeoman. With the aid of his sturdy young sons he tilled a stretch of fruitful acres, and was also owner and manager of a stage line which crossed the duchy from north to south.

The eldest son, Philipp, had shown an unusual aptitude for learning, and at the instance of his teachers had been sent to Heidelberg, in the northern part of Baden, for more advanced courses of study than the Weinheim schools could provide. Thence he had returned, in 1847, to his native town, and had joined himself as apprentice to a notary of the place, with the expectation of entering the service of the state. When the agitation for reform broke out both Farmer Bickel and his eldest son Philipp, then a youth of nineteen, cast themselves heartily into it; the former, perhaps, chiefly out of sympathy for the downtrodden peasantry, with whose condition his calling must have made him intimately acquainted, and whose wrongs he probably shared; the latter, as a young man in public life, and fresh from the debating clubs of the University, more for political reasons.

When the storm of government opposition to the revolutionary movement burst, the Bickels were among those who sought asylum in the great Republic of the West. First came Father Bickel, with his wife and the younger members of the family. Leaving behind them the wide farmhouse and its fertile fields, to be promptly confiscated, doubtless, by the government, they crossed the desert of the salt sea to the Land of Promise, the Home of Freedom. Arrived in America they joined the company of westward bound adventurers on the trail to what was then the far frontier, and settled on a small farm, or rather what was the makings of a small farm, on the shore of Lake Michigan, in Illinois. This little holding, of ten acres, is now Lincoln Park, one of the beautiful

breathing spaces of the city of Chicago. A few months later, however, cholera broke out in the neighbourhood, and the Bickels sold out and removed to where Evanston now stands, where they secured another piece of land, this time of 180 acres.

Meanwhile the son Philipp had taken passage on a sailing vessel bound to New York. The voyage must have been a long one, for we are told that the stock of provisions ran so low that the ship's company was reduced to a rice diet. Three rice meals a day is a synonym for good living in wide regions of the earth; but in our patriot-exile, accustomed to the substantial fare of a German farmhouse, it bred such a dislike for this wholesome cereal that never afterward could he be induced to taste it.

When the ship at last docked at New York, Philipp at once struck out into the country to seek work as a farm labourer. At the first farmhouse at which he called to ask for employment the farmer pointed to the young man's hands, soft and white from a student's desk, and remarked, "'Tis not much work you'll do with hands like that." To the wise a word is sufficient. At the next farmhouse our student took care to keep his hands in his pockets, and was engaged. The farmer must have been surprised, later, when Philipp's hands came into sight; but he kept to his bargain, and was delighted to find that he had not merely secured a capable farm hand, but an educated man, who could speak both French and German, and who became an excellent teacher to the farmer's children. After a short stay in the home of this worthy man, young Bickel took the road again, and we next

find him manager of an Indian trading post at Waukegan, in Wisconsin.

It was while here that Philipp Bickel passed through that spiritual experience which is the true starting point of our story. Up to this time he had had no personal knowledge of the grace of God. Born into a Lutheran family at a time when German Lutheranism had already well-nigh lost its spiritual life, the atmosphere of Heidelberg and the influences which had been about him since the close of his student life had left him practically an infidel. He was a zealot for human liberty, but a stranger to the freedom wherewith Christ makes His people free. At Waukegan he was providentially brought into friendly relations with some pious Baptists, and there was awakened in his heart a longing for that true liberty which is spiritual, and which Christ alone can bestow. Under the ministry of Rev. I. Cogshall, a faithful preacher of the Gospel, he was led into a true experience of repentance and faith, and having confessed Christ by baptism in the waters of Lake Michigan was received into the membership of the Waukegan Church.

From Waukegan Mr. Bickel removed to Louisville, Kentucky, to assume the editorship of a German secular paper published in that city. His native literary ability, superior education and legal training fitted him to achieve success as a journalist and politician, while his experience as champion of popular rights in his native land, and the intimate association into which his life in America had brought him with the labouring classes, served to render him an acceptable expo-

nent of democratic ideas. The young reformer, for he was yet but twenty-three, was so vigorous and outspoken that he provoked a local political storm. The proprietor of the paper took sides against the editor, and went so far as to threaten his life, revolver in hand. Bickel, however, was a man of powerful physique. He wrenched the weapon from the hand that held it, and the proprietor suddenly and ignominiously landed at the bottom of the office stairs, and there received the editor's resignation. Our reformer's hands were free for higher service. "Disgusted with man's perversity, God's time for Philipp Bickel had come."

From the very beginning of his Christian life, the pastor and members of the Waukegan Church had been impressed with the conviction that here was a man chosen of God for some special service, and had urged him to prepare himself for the Christian ministry. "The indomitable energy of the man had, however, already secured for him a very desirable position in life, and there was something to renounce if he would accept the dependent position of a Baptist preacher. He resolved to apply himself with renewed energy to his calling, and so to earn as much as possible, in order that he might give freely to the cause of Christ. He aimed especially at assisting others to enter upon the service from which he himself shrank. Still, this was not the Lord's purpose for him, as he soon learned. It was himself, his life, that was wanted for the service of the Master. When he realized this he obeyed the call, and unreservedly yielded himself with all that he had to the work of preaching the Gospel."

Captain Bickel, in his memorial article, "The Old Blacksmith," tells us that it was by the words of a godly Scotch woman in a country store that his father was led to realize his obligation to Christ, and in penitence and gratitude to devote himself to the active service of his Saviour; and indicates that it was a feeling of disappointment at the failure of his second attempt to act the champion of popular rights which prepared his heart for the message God sent him through this humble woman.

Soon after the revolver episode he entered the Baptist Theological Seminary at Rochester, N. Y., where he remained until 1855, taking the regular course with the English-speaking students, and at the same time acting as tutor to the young men in the German Department.

A memorable incident of these seminary days was the visit to Rochester of Pastor Oncken, the founder and beloved leader of the Baptist cause in middle Europe. Dr. Yohann Gerhard Oncken, eminent in learning and piety, and known as the Apostle of Germany, was now in the midst of his half century of fruitful missionary labour. Being on a visit to America, and happening to hear that some young Germans were at Rochester studying for the ministry, he came to the city to see them. The students were delighted beyond measure, and at their request Bickel, who had already given proofs of poetic ability, composed an ode of welcome to their distinguished guest, little dreaming that he himself was even then being prepared by God to be Oncken's successor.

It was while a student at Rochester that Philipp

Bickel met and wooed and won the gentle and winsome Christian girl who was to share his home and his labours for half a century. Katherine Clarke, better known to her friends as Kitty, was the daughter of Rev. Samuel R. Clarke, who had the distinction of being the first graduate of Hamilton Seminary. He undertook pioneer evangelistic work in the Miami Valley, but his earthly ministry was soon cut short by death. His widow became matron of the Rochester Orphanage, a position she occupied for many years. Kitty, who had been born at Utica, N. Y., May 10, 1834, and who was therefore still in her teens when she made the acquaintance of her future husband, accompanied her mother to Rochester, and secured a position as teacher in a ladies' seminary in that city.

Some of the good people of Rochester presently began to take notice of our brawny, brainy young German theologue, and wishing to put in his way the means necessary to continue his studies, organized a young folks' class for the study of German, which they invited him to conduct. One of his pupils was Kitty Clarke, and while she took from him her first lessons in the speech of the Fatherland they taught each other the golden lore of that which was from the beginning, is now and ever shall be the greatest thing in the world. The widow Clarke, however, did not welcome the prospect of her daughter Kitty becoming a German *hausfrau* and with the hope of preventing the match required the young man to absent himself from Rochester for two years, during which time there was to be no correspondence between the lovers. Philipp agreed to this proposal, and faith-

fully observed the terms of the agreement. But love laughs at locksmiths. Love-poems began to appear in the several papers which Kitty was accustomed to read, and in these she heard the voice of the heart of her lover, and was content. When the appointed time had elapsed he returned to claim his bride, and they were married, February 17, 1857, by Rev. I. Scott, in the city of Rochester. Thus was begun a home life not, indeed, without many trials, but of an ideal beauty in its perfect mutual love and trust and helpfulness.

During his two years' probation Mr. Bickel had taken up work among German immigrants in Cincinnati, Ohio, as city missionary of the Ninth Street Baptist Church, and to this city to share his labour he now brought his young wife. The new life, in a strange city, among foreigners, was not without its hardships to the American girl; but with a simple faith and love she went forward in the path of duty, taking up cheerfully the tasks that God set to her hand, and daily growing in those Christian graces which won the hearts of all who met her.

Mr. Bickel's work for the Germans in Cincinnati was at first carried on in the open air, afterward in an old engine house, and later in what was a mere shanty on Mary Street. He had not chosen an easy field. "The godless German district," Captain Bickel calls it. The Germans of the neighbourhood were in the main either formalists in religion or avowed skeptics. For a time there was open and strong opposition, extending to attempts at personal violence, and culminating in a plot to poison the missionary and his family. But

the fearlessness of the preacher, and the sweetness and gentleness of the preacher's wife, either daunted or won the leaders of the opposition, and the work of evangelization went forward with increasing success.

During the early years of Mr. Bickel's ministry in Cincinnati he added to his city mission activities frequent pioneer preaching trips into the regions beyond. Some of these took him into Kentucky. Those were the days of the great agitation throughout the North for the abolition of slavery, and there was little love lost between the anti-slavery state of Ohio, and the slave-holding state of Kentucky. Some of those who were responsible for providing for Mr. Bickel's support as city missionary objected to these excursions into the neighbouring state, and intimated that their continuance would mean a drop of one hundred dollars in his salary. With the small stipend he was receiving this would involve no little hardship, but Mr. Bickel knew only one road: the path of duty as God revealed it to him. The salary committee reconsidered their action, decided that it was uncalled for, and offered no further objection to his missionary journeys.

The little group of believers which worshipped in the shack on Mary Street developed, under his earnest ministry, into the First German Baptist Church of Cincinnati, properly housed, and with an influential and flourishing congregation. This church became a Mother of Churches, and of Preachers. From its early membership went forth many ministers and missionaries. Several branch churches, or mission churches, were organized dur-

ing Mr. Bickel's stay. "Ten years saw five churches established."

Meanwhile the Civil War drew on apace. Mr. Bickel had already taken an active part in helping fugitive slaves on their way north to Canada, the Promised Land of the oppressed black man, as an agent of the "Under-Ground Railroad." When the war finally broke out he devoted himself to the cause of the North, and of the slave, as fully as circumstances permitted. Was it not his zeal for Union and Freedom that had sent him into exile from the Fatherland?

Of those days a member of his family writes as follows: "When war was declared all the young men of the church volunteered. When they went to join the colours it was with the understanding that in case of sickness a welcome awaited them at our home. From time to time one and another claimed this hospitality, and became our guests for a few days. The only case of serious illness was that of a Christian brother, who had lain uncared for in Andersonville Prison with a bad form of typhoid fever. When he was delirious only a strong man could control him, and it was the wish of the physician in charge of the case to have him taken to a hospital. The poor fellow had such terrible recollections of the prison that he feared even a hospital and begged to be allowed to remain in his pastor's home. Contrary to our fears the Lord blessed the treatment given. He completely recovered and after three months was able to return to his duty. For many years he was one of the most faithful members of our Cincinnati church."

Although Mr. Bickel was excused, on account of

his calling, from active service, he could not content himself to bide snugly at home while other young men were bearing the hardships and perils of war. He had long ago become a naturalized American citizen, and was willing to fight and die for the principles for which the Republic stood. Cincinnati, being a border city, was constantly threatened by the southern forces, but he committed his little family to the keeping of God, and marched away to the war.

"While your father was away," Mrs. Bickel afterward related to her children, "I was fortunate in having with me a woman who had escaped from slavery, and had come to me begging I should give her a home till she could get farther north. She was very faithful, and at night would not leave me and the children, but would bring a mat and lie down before our door. None of us thought of undressing at night, but lay down to rest with our clothes on, and each child knew which package he or she must take if we were obliged to flee before morning. There were many rebels in the neighbourhood. The house in which we lived, and indeed nearly the entire street, belonged to George Pendleton, and we were often roused from our slumbers by horsemen coming to bring him information of the proceedings of these rebels. Their plan was to first of all cut off the water supply, so we always kept our rain-water cistern filled. We used all necessary precautions, but we were thankful when matters became more quiet, and Father could return to his church and family."

Mr. Bickel returned from the war with an affection of the throat which practically disabled him

for public service. From the beginning of his city missionary life he had occasionally found time to exercise his literary talent, and now he turned his energies into the production of German Christian literature. Religious articles, poems, translations of English hymns, flowed from his pen. His first serious venture, as a Christian publisher, was a Baptist Young People's Paper, and a Sunday-school Hymnal. This undertaking, which was at first at his own private expense, soon developed into the German Baptist Publication Society. At the request of the German Baptists of America he became president of the Society, and editor and publisher of the various periodicals which it issued. The Publication House was established in Cleveland, and eventually, in 1870 or thereabout, he found it necessary to remove his home to that city. The work of the Society developed rapidly, and soon he was devoting to it almost his whole attention. The first building, erected in 1871, was destroyed by fire, but was soon replaced by one larger and handsomer, which became a centre of great usefulness.

Meanwhile, in Germany Pastor Oncken was feeling the burden of increasing years, and was looking for a man upon whom he might lay the responsibilities he had borne for half a century. In 1876 Mr. Bickel—now Dr. Bickel, having received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Denison University—visited Germany and had an interview with Dr. Oncken. "The venerable leader recognized in the younger man from America one who, by personal qualifications, by knowledge of the grace of God, and by long experience in a

similar sphere, was peculiarly fitted to carry forward the work of the Baptist Mission in Germany and other lands." He laid the matter upon his visitor's heart, and to Dr. Bickel his words were the voice of God calling him to a wider field of usefulness. The next year, with the assistance of the American Baptist Publication Society, he returned to Germany, accompanied by his family, henceforth to make the Fatherland again his home. Thirty years before, a mere stripling, a lonely fugitive Jacob with naught but a staff in his hand, he had gone to be a sojourner in a strange land. He returns, having "become two bands," rich in wife and children, rich also in the knowledge of God, and in experience of Christian life and work.

During those thirty years a new Germany had arisen. The dream of the young revolutionaries of '48 had in part been fulfilled. The various states had been federated into one great empire, prosperous and strong. The disabilities of the peasantry had been removed. German democracy, however, was yet only a distant hope. It was doubtless with some feeling of regret that Dr. Bickel exchanged the free institutions of the West for the cast-iron absolutism of the new empire. Religiously, conditions had not improved. In the State Church spiritual life was at a low ebb. The universities were hotbeds of infidelity. The preaching of the Gospel, and meetings for worship, by evangelical Christians, if not actually prohibited, were at least often interfered with and interrupted by agents of the government.

Dr. Bickel settled in Hamburg, and there devoted himself to the two lines of work which had

occupied Dr. Oncken: the production and dissemination of Christian literature, and the training up of a Christian ministry. The German Baptist Union transferred to him the management of its publishing business, and into its reorganization and development he threw himself with characteristic energy and determination. The business prospered and grew, and became a power for good, its influence extending far beyond the confines of Germany, among the German-speaking populations of the adjoining countries. It is mainly due to Dr. Bickel's sagacity and enterprise and unremitting toil that the Baptists of Germany now own an admirable Publication House, equipped with all modern appliances, in the city of Cassel, in Hessia, to which city the publishing business was removed from Hamburg; and here Dr. Bickel passed the last years of his life. Here he carried on not only the normal work of the publication department, including the issuing of various religious periodicals, hymnals and helpful books, but also that of the Tract Society and of Bible distribution. He performed a valuable service as agent of the National Bible Society of Scotland, and by the colporters under his direction nearly two million copies of the Scriptures were distributed among the German-speaking peoples of Europe, many of these copies being placed in the hands of socialists and free-thinkers, to say nothing of the merely nominal Christians of the Established Church. There were about fifty colporters under his direction, who travelled far and wide over Central Europe, preaching the Gospel and scattering the printed word of God among the people. Many of them met hos-

tility, abuse and violence. Dr. Bickel's home was their Mecca. There they found sympathy and counsel and strength. Gathered about his table, or at his fireside, they told the story of their journeys in Germany and Austria, among the Balkan Mountains or on Russian steppes; and their difficulties and trials, their labours and successes, were the theme of conversation and prayer. As a result of the work of these men many persons were brought to a new life in Christ, and in several countries Baptist churches were established, not only among German-speaking peoples, but among those of other languages.

German Baptists owe a debt of gratitude also to Dr. Bickel for the part he took in training young men for the Christian ministry. To the building up and development of the Hamburg Theological Seminary he gave unstintingly his time and strength. In his mind the colportage work and the Seminary course were closely connected. From the ranks of the colporters came many students into the school, and on the other hand the work done by the colporters broke up the ground for the evangelistic and pastoral labours of the seminary graduates. The Seminary at Hamburg, the Publication House at Cassel—these remain as substantial memorials of thirty-six years of faithful and fruitful labour on behalf of the spiritual redemption of the Fatherland. Dr. Bickel was indeed during all these years the head and front of Baptist work not in Germany only but throughout Central Europe.

Dr. Bickel was a lover of children, and was loved by them. He gathered them about him in the Sun-

day school. He sent out from his presses literature suited to their needs. His "*Singvöglein*," or "*Singing-Birdie*," with its bright words and melodies, became a favourite in all the Sunday schools of the countries speaking the German tongue.

Such, told all too imperfectly, is the story of the life-work of Dr. Philipp Bickel, the father of our Captain Bickel. He was a man of great heart, of strong faith, of ardent love of truth and righteousness, of wide vision, of tireless energy. He was a great German, a great American, a true patriot, a faithful Christian. The movement for popular freedom and national reform into which he flung himself in his fiery youth failed of its purpose, but he was privileged to labour for sixty years for the highest interests of his fellow-countrymen, in the New World and in the Old. It cannot be doubted that those fundamental principles of democracy, so inseparable from Baptist institutions, so vital in the teachings of the New Testament, which his whole work tended to spread throughout the Fatherland, will eventually have a place in the creation of a modern democratic Germany. How great have been the spiritual results, in thousands of lives, of those sixty years of faithful service, and how rich are the harvests yet to be reaped from the seed he has sown, only God can know, and only eternity can reveal.

When the writer was in Germany in the summer of 1907, having come overland from Japan on his way to Canada, he had the great honour of being the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Bickel, in their delightful home in Cassel, and cherishes the memory of the fatherly and motherly welcome accorded him, and

of the loving hospitality he enjoyed as a friend of the dear son in far-away Japan, and as a missionary of the Gospel. "Loving" is distinctly the right adjective, even to the patriarchal parting embrace, given in the warm-hearted German fashion. It was a home of a genuinely Christian atmosphere, where dwelt the peace of God. They had the year before celebrated their golden wedding. Their sons and daughters had grown up and gone forth to lives of usefulness. Dr. Bickel, though already fourscore, was enjoying a hale old age, the bright quiet evening of a strenuous life. Tall and of substantial physique, he made on one the impression of strength and vigour, while in his voice and face were kindness, goodness and peace. Mrs. Bickel, seven years her husband's junior, although more worn and frail than he, was beautiful in her gentle refinement and spirituality. To be their guest was better than to sit at the table of kings. Their home closely adjoined the great publishing house which he had so long controlled, but the active management of which he was transferring to Herr J. G. Lehmann, his "right hand," who was to him as a son to a father. Under Herr Lehmann's kind conduct an interesting tour was made of the various departments of the Publication House, a centre of spiritual light for wide regions of Europe; and also a visit to places of chief interest in the city. Emperor William was to be in the city the following day, and the writer was urged to extend his sojourn and have a glimpse of His Majesty; but companions in travel awaited his return to Berlin, and he counted it a sufficient honour to have sat at meat with members of a higher than earthly no-

bility. In their company one was not far from Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

In these days, when the flagrant crimes committed against nations and against humanity by some elements of the German people have aroused the indignation of the whole world, Christian and heathen, it is pleasant to remember the godly and honourable friends one has met in the Fatherland, and to believe that "somewhere in Germany" are many sweet and lovable souls, who after the war will become mediators of peace and amity between the German nation and the peoples who have been compelled to count it an enemy.

The following year Mrs. Bickel was called away to the heavenly land; and on November ninth, 1914, in his eighty-sixth year, Dr. Bickel passed on to his reward, full of years and honours. Although the growing infirmities of age compelled him during the closing years of life to withdraw from active service, he did not slacken his interest in all that pertained to the Kingdom of God. His intellectual faculties remained clear to the end. We are told that during these quiet evening years of life he devoted himself much to prayer, till in the gray of a November morning the summons came, and he went his way to the heavenly Fatherland, out of the storm of war which was already desolating the earth.

We cannot close this sketch of the life of Captain Bickel's father better than with words which the Captain himself wrote in honour of his father's memory:

"The Smithy is empty. The tools lie idle. The long

day is spent. The evening has come. The old Smith has passed on down the long road to the beautiful fields by the still waters, on through the Valley of Peace, to the Mountains of the 'Promise Fulfilled.' It was of these fields, this valley, these mountains, that he so often sang to the children who gathered at the Smithy door to see the sparks fly from the anvil.

"But there is no sorrow in the hearts of those who saw the old Smith go. His work was done, well done, and the songs of hope and faith and love remain in the hearts of those who heard them, to cheer them on their way to the fields, the valley, the mountains beyond.

"Sixty years of service, active service, in the name of the Baptist churches of the United States, was the record of the old Smith, first under the Home, then under the Foreign Society, a record of a strenuous life, a life of large vision. A man of iron will and high ideals, a poet and hymn-writer of no mean merit, honoured by one institution of learning because of his 'fearless advocacy of righteousness,' by another for his literary attainments, his legacy to his children was this,—that the Spirit of Christ was in him. To the writer's sadly human heart, however, the most helpful remembrance of the old Smith is this, that old and young, strong and weak, the man of affairs, the official, the student, the mechanic, the labourer, the little child, each and all said, 'The Old Blacksmith is my Friend!'"

As our story proceeds it will be seen that Captain Bickel, in many of his lines of Christian activity, followed in his father's footsteps, but beyond that he was the true son of his father in his fearless devotion to duty, his intellectual and moral strength and energy, his ability to bring things to pass, and most of all in this, that he won the confidence, admiration and love of people of all ages

and of every condition of life, Japanese and foreigner, missionary and sailor, heathen and Christian. Literally, throughout his wide Island parish, and wherever else his duty took him, he was recognized as friend by "old and young, strong and weak, the man of affairs, the official, the student, the mechanic, the labourer and the little child."

II

THE MAKING OF CAPTAIN BICKEL

ON the twenty-first of September, in the year of grace 1866, in the humble but happy home of a city missionary in Cincinnati, was born the hero of this story. It is recorded as a matter of interest in the family annals that on the self-same day the head of the household was honoured by appointment to the editorship of the religious publications issued by the German Baptist churches of the United States. Luke, as the newcomer was named, was born an American, his German-born father having long since taken out his naturalization papers; but in blood he was English-American on his mother's side, and German on his father's.

Already four children had come to bless the Bickel home, and later came four others, Luke standing half-way down the family line. His birth fell at an auspicious time. The Civil War was over. Pastor Bickel had been welcomed back from army service by his family and his church. He had built him a house on one of the hills beside the city, and in the pure air of those breezy heights, and in the warm atmosphere of a home where love reigned, the baby boy thrived finely.

Early in his second year, however, he suddenly

fell ill, and so seriously that the Christian doctor who had been called to prescribe for him felt compelled to prepare the parents to part with their child. "Would you be willing, Mrs. Bickel," he said, "to return the babe to the keeping of Him who has lent him to you?" The mother could only reply through her tears, "Oh, if he might but be spared to me yet another year!" On the same day, to the doctor's surprise, the disease took a favourable turn, and the parents knew that their prayers had been answered. A year passed, and again Luke fell dangerously ill. The doctor repeated his question of the previous year. "Last year," replied the mother, "God heard my petition and has permitted me to keep the child until now. He will again hear me, and still leave the child in my arms." Again her desire was granted, and the disease was overcome. For some years, however, Luke had but indifferent health, being nervous and peevish, without the good spirits natural to childhood; and his mother sometimes feared that she had been too importunate in her desire and prayer that his life might be spared.

As time passed on, however, he grew into normal health. His sister writes that as a child he was of a quiet and timid disposition, affectionate and witty. He was of a religious bent, with a noticeable love for prayer. By this time the family had removed to Cleveland, in order that Mr. Bickel might be in closer touch with the Publication House. Mrs. Bickel had learned to love the life of a pastor's wife, and to enjoy her own share in city missionary work. She had been as an angel of God in homes of sorrow and sickness. When

she reluctantly parted with her people—for they had become her people as well as her husband's—she carried with her the love of many hearts.

If Luke Bickel owed much to his father in the intellectual gifts and strong traits of character which he inherited from him, and in the fine example of noble manhood and Christian devotion which he saw in him, he owed his mother an equal debt. Perhaps he would have said that her share in what he became, and in what he achieved, should have an even higher valuation. He tells us that while his father's fearless advocacy of every good cause, and uncompromising hostility to every evil, won him many enemies, his mother's gentleness and sweetness of disposition made every one her friend.

One or two instances of her kind thoughtfulness for others have been preserved to us. Before her marriage, while a teacher in Rochester, it was her custom every morning, before meeting her classes, to go to the home of a poor bed-ridden negro woman and minister to her needs, aiding her with her toilet, tidying up her room, and making her comfortable for the day. Some years later, when she was a mother with young children about her, it happened that a woman of the neighbourhood died, leaving a babe of the same age as Mrs. Bickel's youngest. On hearing of this she had the child brought to her own home, and nourished it at her own breast, with her own child, until it was mature enough to take solid food.

"Our sweet, loving, unselfish, patient little mother was our Friend. To see her face sad was our sufficient punishment. Friends used to say that we worshipped our mother. She had a great

love for children, and always stood for their rights. She never punished us when excited. Often she would talk matters over with us, and then pray with us, and then the corporal punishment would follow. We realized that our punishment was deserved and wise. Sister Penelope, a great strong girl, would often come to Mother of her own accord, and ask to be punished."

Mrs. Bickel was always the companion of her children, retaining her youthful spirit, keeping abreast of the times, hospitable to new ideas, and thus able to enter into the thought and experience of her sons and daughters as they grew to manhood and womanhood. When they had flitted from the home nest she still kept in close touch with them through her pen. "Her letters were a great inspiration to our lives. They seemed like messages from heaven, aiding us in the trials and temptations of life to overcome, and to live according to our Master's will."

In Captain Bickel's consummate courtesy and refinement, the bloom of which was not marred by the years he spent among rough seafaring men; in his delicacy of feeling and readiness of sympathy; in his forwardness to help; in his unfailing patience and humility, and in an almost feminine gentleness and tenderness toward all the weak and distressed, we see part of his inheritance from his mother, and one result of the lessons in living which he learned in boyhood at her side.

The secular education of the Bickel children was not neglected. Full advantage was taken of the public school systems of America and Germany; but in addition to this Dr. Bickel gave his personal

attention to the training of each of his children, taking into account the mental peculiarities and proclivities of each one.

"Father did all in his power to give us a good education, at the same time considering the natural inclination of each child. Father also had the idea that each child should learn to do for himself, and so soon as sufficiently mature should go out into the world and make his own way. 'Always ask the Lord,' he would say to us, 'where He wishes you to go, and then follow.' This advice he repeated again and again, and the consequence is that later years found us scattered all over the earth. Father's time was fully occupied with his mission work, and we children while at home all had our share in the household tasks, and were too busy and happy to crave outside worldly amusements. Nearly every day brought us new guests and visitors, and if they failed to come we enjoyed the novelty of having our parents and our home to ourselves."

What gift could a good Fairy bestow on a child greater than to grow up in just such a simple, humble, hospitable, homely little home, the daily atmosphere of which was cheerfulness, seriousness, godliness and love?

In 1878, when Luke was twelve years of age, the family migrated back to Germany, to make their home first at Hamburg and later at Cassel. Of the nine children born to the Bickels, three had died in early childhood. Of the six remaining, Karl, the eldest, was just out of his teens, while Beatrice, the youngest, was but a baby. The family home life was American rather than German. There was

always an American flag in the house. Meals were cooked and served in the American style. German and English were both in common use in the family intercourse. While in America special attention had been paid to the German, now in Germany, stress was laid on the English. In whichever language any one of the children happened to be addressed by his parents he was expected to reply in the same language. Luke thus began life with two native tongues, and to these he later added Dutch, French, Spanish, and of course Japanese, as well as gaining some knowledge of several other languages.

We are told that as a child Luke was a great lover of neatness and order, carrying this passion sometimes to excess. It distressed him if there was any untidiness or confusion in the house. "With our many guests it was impossible to have things always in their proper places, as we were frequently obliged to give up our own rooms to visitors. Luke's extreme fastidiousness annoyed his sisters, and one day a motto, intended for his edification, was found hanging in the dining-room:

"Mensch Ärgere Dich Nicht."

It only needed a year of sailor life, his sister tells us, to cure him of the excess of this trait, but his innate love of order remained and stood him in good stead on the *Fukuin Maru,* which owed not a little of her charm to the order and neatness which always reigned in her.

Luke had been for some years a pupil in Stirling School, Cleveland, and did not find it easy to accustom himself to the quite different methods of

instruction followed in Germany. For this reason he failed to find much pleasure in his school life in that country. He made good progress, however, and while not a bookworm always stood high in his classes. His favourite studies were geography, music, and the Bible. On being graduated from the Reformed Church Academy, Hamburg, in 1880, he was sent to Soest, where he took three years' collegiate work, after which he spent a year at Wandsbeck Gymnasium.

Meanwhile an important part of his education was that which he was receiving at home. While Dr. Bickel was a Home Missionary in a very wide sense, his influence extending all over Central Europe, Mrs. Bickel was noted for her interest in missions to the heathen. Both with equal zeal laboured together for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ, and the home atmosphere was warmly Christian and missionary. From such a home one may expect missionaries to go forth, and men and women with a wide outlook and an intelligent interest in human affairs. The missionary movement is, by the way, one of the most effective educators of modern times.

Captain Bickel sometimes expressed regret that circumstances had prevented his taking a course of study in theology before beginning his missionary work; but it would be well if all who come to the foreign field fresh from the seminary class-room brought as clear and spiritual views of Christian truth, and as marked an ability to present that truth in an effective manner. In his case the missionary home had fulfilled the function of the theological school. At his father's table, at the family

hearth, he listened to discussions of the fundamental doctrines of religion, and of the application of those doctrines to Christian work. To that home came men from many lands, men in the true apostolic succession, telling what things God had wrought by their hands among the nations. A boy graduated from such a home hardly needs a seminary course. It was no doubt due, moreover, in part at least, to what Luke Bickel learned concerning the spirit and method of missionary work in his own home, from the lips of his parents, and of many other experienced Christian workers, that he was afterward able to plan his own work so wisely, and to carry it out so efficiently, making few of the mistakes which mark and mar the early years of the average missionary.

While the home influences were thus supremely helpful, it was otherwise with some of those which touched his life in the world outside. The agnosticism and materialistic philosophy which had largely replaced religion in the German Empire met him in his school life. Among the teachers in the Academy was an atheist who succeeded in inoculating Luke with his skeptical views, greatly to the concern of his parents. Though religiously inclined from a child he had not yet committed himself to the Christian life. In her urgent desire for the spiritual welfare of her boy his mother not only herself made the matter a subject of prayer, but addressed a letter to the American Baptist Women's Missionary Society, which was about to hold its annual assembly, begging that special prayer be made at that meeting for the conversion of her son. Notice the sequel. At the very time

that the Women's Missionary Conference was in session on the other side of the Atlantic, Luke was led into a personal experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ by a devout simple-minded city mission worker named Wendolf, and forthwith confessing his new found faith and being baptized, became a member of the Hamburg Baptist Church. At once he began to manifest a desire to have others share the blessing he had found, showing a lively interest, for example, in the work of the mission to seamen, and in the sailors' home, the "Strangers' Rest," in the city. It may here be mentioned that Dr. and Mrs. Bickel had the joy of seeing all their children converted, and brought into the fellowship of the German Baptist Church, while they were yet young.

Luke's interest in the Hamburg Mission to Seamen may have been partly due to his own longing for a life on the salt water. Although born in an inland city, and without a sight of the ocean until his twelfth year, he had early conceived a passion for the sea. His father used to smilingly say that it was "all Grandma Clarke's fault." She had fired the boy's heart with the tale of Commodore Perry and his famous Expedition to the coasts of the Far East, beyond the wide Pacific, and had taken him so often to the Perry Monument in Cleveland that it had made a profound impression on him. It is safe to say that neither of them dreamed that some day he would enter the door which Perry had thrown open, and spend his life for the people whom Perry had introduced to the modern world.

Luke's first ocean voyage, from New York to Hamburg, might well have dampened his boyish

ardour for a sailor's life. He suffered much from seasickness. Indeed, he seems to have been constitutionally susceptible to that unpleasant malady, and even after becoming a professional seaman was frequently troubled in this way. At Hamburg, Germany's great port, he was in touch with the sea and shipping. Great ocean liners came to the city quays from many lands beyond the Seven Seas. He played at sailoring by carving out toy vessels, and by going voyaging in a rowboat, with his younger sister for mate, upon the placid Alster.

When Luke first expressed a desire to follow the sea his father, unwilling for him to meet the hardships of a sailor's life, considering also no doubt the great temptations incident to it, and the wrecks of more than ships which strew its course, endeavoured to turn him from his purpose. Thinking to wean him from the salt water he sent him off to school in an inland city. This, however, proved of no avail. Whenever a holiday permitted his first thought was to get to, and on, the nearest water. "If I have no boat, I take a tub," he used to say. On one occasion a woman with two children was very anxious to get across a certain sheet of water, but the boatman refused to ferry her over on account of the tempestuous weather. Luke volunteered his services and rowed them safely across—an incident prophetic of the life of ready and fearless service for which God was preparing him.

Dr. Bickel was not yet able to reconcile himself to having his boy become a sailor, and made one more attempt to anchor him to the land. He proposed to him to take a medical course, and wrote to

a doctor who happened to be a friend of the family, asking his advice in the matter. The reply was for some reason delayed, and meanwhile Luke informed his parents that he could only take up medical studies on the condition that when they were completed he might become a ship's doctor. His father, finding that he was hopelessly in love with the sea, withdrew his opposition and had him apprenticed, for a term of four years, on an English merchant sailing ship. He was now in his eighteenth year, six feet in height, a fine strapping young fellow. When he made his first home visit after a year at sea it was evident that he had not mistaken his calling, and that physically and spiritually the sailor life was agreeing with him. He came back as a happy Christian seaman. "He had found his element."

His voyages during these four years, following "the trail of the deep blue," took him far afield, to the west coast of South America, to Australia, and to Africa, and their incidents would make a fascinating tale of the sea if we could gather them together. It is worth recording that the voyages were made under sail, some of them in the famous clipper ships, the Ships of Tarshish of the day, and were far more interesting and eventful than if made under steam, in the prosaic modern fashion. He was literally a *sailor,* and thus his sea voyages were an especially good preparation for captaining the *Fukuin Maru.*

Every voyage he went gave him an opportunity to save a human life, an opportunity which his courage, strength and swiftness in action enabled him to seize. On one occasion a sailor had thrown

himself into the sea intending to commit suicide. Bickel instantly leaped after him, and overcoming his resistance by sheer force succeeded in rescuing him. The would-be suicide repaid him with curses, on which the other sailors would have thrown the man overboard again had not Bickel intervened.

During these years, and during all the years of his seafaring life, his Christian conduct was an example to all his shipmates. His evident sincerity, and his manly qualities and friendly ways, made him liked and respected by all, even the roughest sailors of the forecastle, and they never made a mock of his religion. On one occasion, while an apprentice, when he had been sent aloft, a number of the sailors were gathered on deck talking together, and spicing their conversation with lewd jokes, and vile language. When they saw Bickel coming down they checked each other, saying, "Hush! Don't use such talk now. Here comes Bickel, and he's a Christian."

He held fast everywhere the principles of total abstinence in which he had been trained. Dining one day in a restaurant in Valparaiso, a Spanish gentleman present, wishing to show him friendliness, had the waiter bring him a bottle of wine. Bickel thanked the gentleman for his kind intention, but pointed to the blue ribbon in his buttonhole. The bottle was ordered removed and a basket of fine fruit set in its place.

At the end of his four years' apprenticeship, of all the ship's company with which he had sailed on his maiden voyage himself and the ship's dog were all that remained on board.

Our young seaman rose steadily and rapidly in

his chosen calling. He duly passed his officer's examination, and by the time he was twenty-eight had attained the rank of captain, holding, though an American, a British Board of Trade certificate as Master Mariner. Sometimes in after years, when storm or calm compelled the Little White Ship to lie at anchor, giving her Captain some hours of unwelcome leisure, he would beguile the time, as he paced with the writer the vessel's deck, with "sailors' yarns" of the days when he sailed the Seven Seas, tales of doings in the forecastle, of visits to strange lands and foreign cities, of adventures on the Pacific and perils on the Atlantic, of the ways of seamen ashore and afloat. Mightily entertaining, and with a spiritual tonic, were these tales, seasoned with salt of humour and grace, told to the music of idly flapping sails or of dashing waves, and full of a love for the wide sea with its far horizons, its mighty throb, its wonder and majesty and mystery; for though not himself a frequent maker of verse he had something of a poet's vision of the beauty of the world.

These ten years of sailor life had much to do with the making of Captain Bickel. He not only gained that expert knowledge of navigation which his work in the Inland Sea demanded, but a body inured to hardship and fatigue. His acquaintance with many lands and association with all kinds of people quickened in him a cosmopolitan spirit, which recognized the human worth of men of every race and condition. Out on the lonely sea, moreover, he became better acquainted with Him who holds the winds in His fist, the sea in the hollow of His hand, and passed through spiritual experi-

ences which fitted him for something higher than mere sailoring, when the time should come.

Meanwhile, a new interest came into his life, which was to yield a very important part of his equipment for his unique mission. From his ocean voyages he ever returned to English ports, and it was in England he found the woman who was to make the *Fukuin Maru* a home, no matter by what strange shore it might anchor, and to do much to create of it a floating Bethel, where men were conscious of the presence of God. Annie Burgess was born in Norwich, a town whose name is a household word with all English-speaking children who have not been defrauded of their rights in the nursery poems of Mother Goose. In London, in 1892, she first met Captain Bickel. He was then Second Officer on the S. S. *Norse King,* running between Montreal and London, and had added to his seafaring adventures some remarkable experiences in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, off the Magdalene Islands, and in the vicinity of Belle Isle Strait. The meeting occurred at the home of a mutual friend and in the immediate, instinctive way in which such things happen they knew from the first that God meant them for each other. Our Captain, decisive and prompt in all his doings, was no laggard in love, and lost no time in wooing and winning the woman he felt God had chosen for him. The marriage took place in 1893, and the new home was established in the great city.

It was a lonely home, however, for the young wife, who could only enjoy her husband's society during the brief days his ship was at its home port, and it was a great joy to her when he decided to

remain with her over one voyage, and take his examinations for master mariner. In these examinations he was successful, and now stood, in rank, at the top of his chosen profession. For his wife's sake, however, and perhaps also that he might enjoy more frequently that home life to which he had been so long a stranger, he discontinued his long voyages to lands over sea, contenting himself with coasting trips around the British Islands. Even so the young couple could enjoy each other's society only in homeopathic doses, and when their first child, Philip, was born Captain Bickel yielded to his wife's persuasions to seek employment on shore, for a time at least.

A kind Providence seconded Mrs. Bickel's desire. Some of the directors of the London Baptist Publication Society, who happened to be intimate friends of Dr. Philipp Bickel and knew of his great success in promoting the work of the German Baptist Publishing Concern, invited the young captain to an interview, and as a result of the interview asked him to assume control of the Society's business. The business was at that time in an almost moribund condition, and was carried on in a small office on a back street in a very unfavourable location. The Captain accepted the task and determined to put the business on a better footing or die in the attempt. In its reorganization and rejuvenation he discovered marked administrative and executive ability. The quality of the output was improved, and its quantity greatly increased, and within a year the business had so developed that the directors moved it into better quarters in a business part of the city, on Paternoster Road. Here it

continued to thrive and prosper, Captain Bickel devoting himself to it so earnestly and unremittingly, indeed, that there was danger of his breaking down his health, the free life of a sailor having unfitted him for the confinement of an office. At the close of four years the London Baptist Publication House was financially sound and strong, was having a large yearly turn-over, and was doing a work of great value to the Baptist churches of Britain.

Not content with the Christian service he was rendering through the Publication House, he interested himself in the spiritual needs of the great metropolis, engaging, like his father, in Sunday-school work, for he, too, was a lover of children.

He was in the midst of these fruitful labours when a call came to him to undertake a new work, in a strange land, on the opposite side of the planet; a call to leave his cozy English home, newly established after many years of homelessness on the lonely sea, and to become again a wanderer on the face of the waters. A man was wanted to sail a Gospel Ship and carry on a Gospel Mission among the neglected Islanders of Japan. A ship-owner of Glasgow had made an offer of a vessel, and a Missionary Society was looking for a missionary-mariner. Some leading members of that society had come to Europe on this quest, and had visited Dr. Bickel and his Publication House and Seminary at Hamburg. They told of the needs of the Islanders and of the opportunity now offered to meet those needs. "But all avails nothing," they said, "unless we can find a man. May not your son be he?" "It would not be becoming in me to recom-

mend my own son," replied Dr. Bickel, "but your journey takes you to London. There you can meet and talk with him." Accordingly they crossed the Channel, and arriving in London found the Captain busy with his duties at the Rooms on Paternoster Road. Their proposal that he should become missionary to the Japanese Islanders at first amazed him, he never having taken a course in theology, but finally he recognized in their request the voice of Him who appeared to Isaiah in the temple: "Whom shall we send? and who will go for us?" and humbly replied, "Here am I, send me."

His love for the sea, and a long cherished feeling that some day he might become a missionary, made this response an easier one to him, though always when duty called he had ears only for her voice. To Mrs. Bickel it was a real sacrifice to leave the home land, break up her home, and part from kindred and friends. Other missionary wives could have a fixed abode, no matter how humble or amid what unpleasant surroundings, which they might transform into a home, and where they might rear their children. The lady of the *Fukuin Maru* must be content to call the ship her home, and to live a wanderer's life. But love and duty prevailed also with her.

Resigning immediately his position in the Publication House, Captain Bickel devoted the remainder of his time in London to a brief course of study in Spurgeon's College, and in May, with his wife and their little son, made the journey to Japan.

Into the making of Captain Bickel there entered the courage, energy, determination, fire and

strength of his German father; the refinement, delicacy, purity, gentleness and self-forgetful love of his American mother; and the companionship, sympathy and loving help of his English wife. There went into it the wholesome atmosphere of an ideal Christian home, the bracing discipline of life at sea, the broadening influence of almost world-wide travel, and an experience in lines of Christian work for which the Inland Sea Mission would call. There entered into it, also, silent influences of the Divine Spirit, deep heart experiences of the presence of God. For when we seek to analyze the secret of a man's power we find there are elements with which our scalpel or crucible cannot deal: deep well-springs of life known only to God.

And so he came to us, an instrument for God's service which God Himself had chosen and fashioned, as surely as He had selected Moses, David or Isaiah for the work to which they were called.

Luke Bickel, like our Lord, "began to be about thirty years of age," when he entered upon the special work for which God had been preparing him. The years covered by that work were less than a score. But we know that God did not count His labour lost. The public ministry of our Lord was much more brief.

III

THE INLAND SEA

White wings folded to rest
  Over Banshu's silver fiord,
Sunlight and moonlight and starlight
  And scent of the blossoming hills,
Whisper of waves on the strand,
  Hush of the stars on the sea,—
Oft when the night-wind calls
  Do I see the moonlight's gold
Glow through the dusk of the pines
  That sigh to the fisher girls.

White wings lifted in flight
  O'er the blue of the Harima Deep,
North wind and west wind and south wind
  And cool salt breath of the sea,
Song of the sailors at work,
  Song of the children at play,—
Oft when the twilight falls
  Do I watch the round red moon
Rise through the purple mists
  On the boats of the fisher lads.

White wings drooping in sleep
  As the day dies down in the west,
Sunset and starlight and silence
  And mystic rune of the tide,
Kiss of the breeze on my cheek,
  Hush of the night in my heart,—

Yonder the evening star
O'er Kitagi's shadowy isle,
But far are the pines on the hill
That sigh to the fisher girls.

GEOGRAPHICALLY, at least, Japan is the Britain of the Pacific and of Asia. With her several large islands, and the multitude of lesser ones which are scattered over the adjacent waters, we may compare Great Britain and Ireland, and the many islands which lie off their coasts. The chain of the Kuriles, their hills still snow-capped when the writer beheld them on a day in late July, almost links up with the Aleutian chain off the shores of Kamschatka, thus binding the Sunrise Kingdom to America in the far north, while the Liu Chius, steeped in perpetual summer, bridge the southern sea to Formosa, thus making Japan a near neighbour of the United States in the Philippines. From the Kurile Strait to the Bashee Channel is a span of more than thirty degrees of latitude, and of thirty-five degrees of longitude; and if a tourist arrived in Yokohama wishes to find the limits of the realm of Yoshihito he must make a journey of nearly two thousand miles into the northeast, and another journey of about two thousand miles into the southwest, so far flung is the Island Empire of Japan. His westerly journey would bring him, after nearly four hundred miles travel, to the shore of the Inland Sea in the neighhourhood of Kobe, and then down its shining, isle-strewn waters to Moji, a voyage of three hundred miles; and that is as far as we need to accompany him at present.

The Inland Sea is fenced from the open Pacific

by Shikoku, the Island-of-the-Four-Countries, on the south; and by Kyushu, the Island-of-the-Nine-Provinces, on the west; while north lie the Sanyo Provinces of the main island, known to Japanese as Hondo. In this sea-wall the Creator has set three splendid gates: the Kii Channel, on the east of Shikoku; the Bungo Strait, on the west; and the Strait of Shimonoseki, between Hondo and Kyushu. Through these three gates the mighty waters of the Pacific come sweeping in, in three tidal streams, each holding to its own time-table, and these three presently coming into conflict, writhe and swirl and twist through the tortuous channels which separate the islands with a tangle and confusion of tides most perplexing and embarrassing to the navigator.

No one who has sojourned for ever so brief a time in the Mikado's Empire, or has touched at her shores as he went his way across the world, needs any formal introduction to the Inland Sea,—*Seto-Nai-Kai,* the "Sea within the Straits," as the Japanese call it. Its fame is world-wide as one of the most beautiful parts of beautiful Japan. Every tourist looks forward with delightful anticipation to his first glimpse of its waters, and its memory abides with him forever as one of the pleasantest scenes of his planet pilgrimage. From the promenade deck of the big ocean liner, speeding on its way from Vancouver to Hongkong, or from Shanghai to San Francisco, one gazes with delight on the ever-changing panorama, or with face glued to the window of a Sanyo Railway parlour-car has fugitive and tantalizing glimpses of its enchanting loveliness.

This is but a bowing acquaintance, however, with Our Lady of a Thousand Isles. A degree more intimate is that to which one may attain by taking the round trip on one of the little passenger steamers which ply between Kobe and Shimonoseki, calling at the various ports on the Sanyo and Shikoku coasts. This takes one zigzagging in a most delightful manner into all kinds of undreamed-of and picturesque places. The writer remembers with pleasure an excursion of this kind which he made in the Inland Sea one long ago summer, with a friend who had come to Japan on a holiday visit. When one makes this trip he must be sure to have a friend along: there is too much fun and scenery scattered along the route for one to consume it by himself alone. The only drawback to our enjoyment was that there was that summer one of those epidemics of cholera which used to afflict Japan, and as we cruised up the Sanyo coast at night, at every port we made, all the passengers were routed out of their bunks, or rather, out of the little cabin which served as the universal bunk, and inspected by a squad of doctors and policemen,

> "By the struggling moonbeams' misty light
> And a lantern dimly burning,"

to ascertain whether our cholera germs had not developed since our previous parade an hour before.

But for real heart intimacy with the *Seto-Nai-Kai*, one must steal out upon its shining waters in a sailing craft, and forgetting the crazy restless modern world with its timepieces and time-tables

and calendars, float and drift for weeks or months together amid the uncounted isles, not "whithersoever the governor listeth," as a navigator of a ship of sails in the Inland Sea soon learns to his cost, but as wind and tide may dictate. It was the writer's great privilege, during the first three years of the *Fukuin Maru's* service, to spend a month each summer as the Captain's guest, and in some small degree as an assistant, cruising over the eastern half of the Inland Sea waters, visiting scores of islands and drifting past the shores of scores or hundreds more. From out the shadow of the white sails of the Little White Ship, or from granite hilltops, beneath the wide boughs of ancient pines, he looked forth upon Our Lady of a Thousand Jewels robed in her morning or evening beauty. He saw her lie asleep with the moonbeams on her bosom. He saw her laugh and dimple and sparkle under the bright blue day, when the wind was warm from the west. Ever since, he has regarded her with the heart of a lover. While he writes, three thousand leagues away, he hears again the song of the tide and the chant of the sailors bringing the anchor home; he sees again the evening star hang like a silver lamp in the dusk above Kitagi, and the round red moon rise out of the purple tide in the Harima Nada.

"A wheel within a wheel, an archipelago within an Island Empire," wrote Captain Bickel in description of his unique parish, "such is the Inland Sea. The Islands are many, and of all sizes. Some are mere rocks with a single pine tree jutting out at that odd angle so dear to the Japanese lover of nature. Others are large, well cultivated is-

lands, carrying on their bosoms a population of twenty, thirty, forty thousand souls. That an island a mile long and half a mile wide, rising a thousand feet above the rock-bound coast, should be the home of fifteen hundred people, seems impossible; and yet there are several such. The average height of the Islands is one thousand feet, but one at least lifts its head three thousand. The hills are chiefly granite, hard and beautiful in some places, decaying or decayed to a mere rubble in others. A strange capping of the granite hills with two hundred feet of conglomerate, tossed up by some old-time upheaval in one section, and a line of hard black rock traversing the sea in another, are the chief exceptions to the rule of granite. To stand on one of the peaks and look down upon island after island, channel upon channel, village beyond village, many miles east, many miles west, the beautiful tints of hill and field mingling with the incredible tints of sea and sky in their varying moods, is to realize at last that the seemingly extravagant colouring of the Japanese artist's work is but a true interpretation of nature as seen here."

The bed of the Inland Sea is a great valley, or group of valleys, bordered by the mountain lands of Hondo, Shikoku and Kyushu. Through this valley the tides of the Pacific ebb and flow, and the islands which emerge from its salt flood are but the tops of peaks and ranges whose bases are far down beneath the waters. Their granite slopes, where incapable of cultivation, are clothed with a scattered growth of pines which somehow manage to find footing and food. Those which can with any possible expense of toil be brought under till-

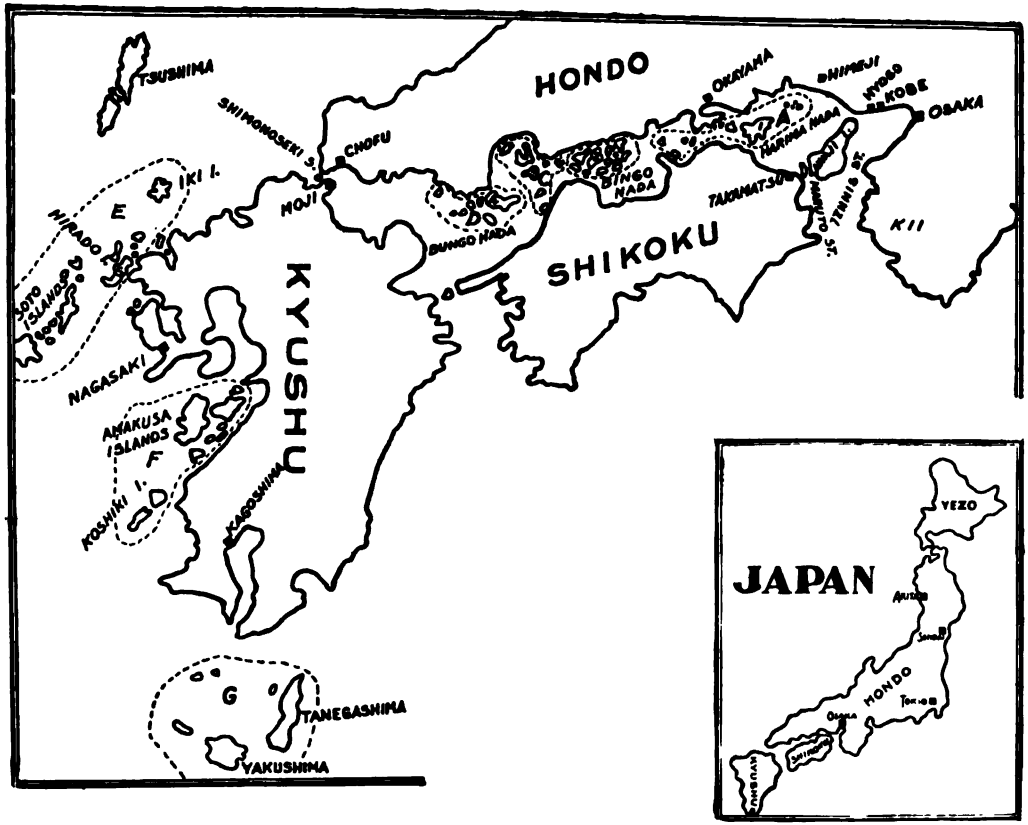
age are covered with fields of vegetables and grain. On their steep sides one can trace the narrow winding paths by which the peasants climb from their village homes beside the beach, carrying up the necessary fertilizers and bringing down the scanty crops which they have coaxed out of the thin soil. On the occasional low and fertile levels which some of the large islands afford may be seen rich acres of wheat and barley; prolific patches of sweet potatoes and other vegetables, some of which are unknown to western farmers; a few fruit trees planted about the farmhouses; and, here and there, a grove of tall bamboos. Cultivated flowers are comparatively rare, considering the flower-loving nature of the Japanese, and one of Captain Bickel's projects at the time the writer was tramping the Islands with him was the distribution of flower seeds to the village homes, and the encouragement of the people to set out plots of flowers about their houses, thus adding some little touch of beauty and refinement to their severely simple and almost squalid lives. Nature, however, especially in Japan, never fails to adorn herself with such charms as she may, and on hillsides unsuited to cultivation she delights the eye with a profusion of azaleas, wisteria, or other wild flowers, and to all are given with impartial hand the beauty of sea and sky.

As one looks down the silver stretches of the Inland Sea from the vessel's deck, or from some granite hilltop, he notes here and there the characteristic smooth shapely cone of an extinct volcano rising from the waters—miniature Fujiyamas, which through long millenniums before the dawn of

Japanese history gradually piled themselves up from the deep sea levels with the ashes of their internal fires. Now they stand peaceful and green, clothed and in their right mind, so to speak, and are an added element of beauty and interest in the scenery.

The Islands lie for the most part in large clusters, with comparatively wide spaces of open water dividing group from group. Each of these consists of several large islands and many smaller ones. The open reaches of water between are called *nada,* as, the Harima Nada, the Bingo Nada, or as we might say, the Sweep, or Stretch, of Harima or of Bingo. These *nada* have a width of fifty miles or more, and in windy weather manage to get up a pretty lumpy sea. They lie in the track of the typhoons which are born off the south coast of China and travel in a northeasterly direction across the Eastern Sea and up the shores of Japan, as far as Tokyo or beyond, leaving uprooted trees and demolished buildings in their wake. On the occasion referred to above when the writer took the Inland Sea round trip, the little steamer was caught in the edge of such a typhoon just as she was making Kobe harbour, and it was interesting to see the gusts of wind blow off the crests of the waves in horizontal lines of water, and pluck away piece by piece our Japanese flag.

The writer recalls also a certain wild day when the wind had caught the *Fukuin Maru* off a lee shore in the Bingo Nada. It would hardly be called a typhoon, but a gale was blowing heavy enough to render our position somewhat insecure, though we had taken the precaution to lay out an



MAP OF THE INLAND SEA OF JAPAN AND ADJACENT ISLANDS

A. Eastern District
   1. Shozu (Shima)
B. East-Central District
   2. Ikuchi (Jima)
C. West-Central District
   3. Kurahashi (Jima)
D. Western District
   4. Oshima
E. South-western District
   5. Hirado
F. The Sixth Link
G. The Upper Liu Chius

extra anchor. The Captain had sent his family ashore to seek refuge in a Japanese inn while the storm lasted, and those who remained on board the pitching and tossing little vessel, lashed with wind and rain, kept an anxious eye on the weather and wondered if the anchors would hold. The *Fukuin Maru* must have passed through many such and worse experiences, during the typhoon seasons, or in the heavy gales of winter. Often in Yokohama or Tokyo, when trees and fences were falling and roof-tiles flying, we remembered the Little White Ship and wondered what peril she might be in of storm and darkness. If one would know what the force of the waves may be in these comparatively narrow waters, let him notice how great slabs of stone used in the construction of sea-walls or boat-landings have been lifted and shifted.

Such is the Sea of Islands within which lay the larger part of Captain Bickel's parish; beautiful as a glimpse of Paradise, on a fair June morning, but with its roaring gales and swirling tides, its tortuous and uncharted channels, its hidden rocks and treacherous shoals, promising a plenty of difficulty and danger to those who would do business on its waters. Our Captain, there to do "business for the King," found the promise amply fulfilled. "This sea," he writes, "represents in fine weather a veritable wonderland of lovely scenery, but for the navigator it has features that at times cause grave anxiety. Powerful currents sweeping through narrow passages, submerged rocks and sand-banks, strong, sudden gales, with an occasional typhoon, all have a prominent part in the life of one who plans to use a Mission Ship in the

Inland Sea. Typhoons alone have an almost yearly tribute of lives from the Inland Sea, and the Islands suffer heavily through the havoc they work. The writer has seen 75,000 *yen* ($37,500) of damage done in one night on one island alone by one of these destructive gales."

But though the Inland Sea, with its many populous islands, might be supposed to afford ample space for the activities of any one missionary, it did not satisfy the evangelistic zeal of the Skipper of the Gospel Ship. With a Pauline hunger for the regions beyond he looked out across its confines, to the isles of the open sea. If one consults the map of Japan he will notice, in the Korean Strait, the Island of Tsushima, made famous by the great naval battle which virtually ended the Russo-Japanese War, the engagement taking place in the adjacent waters. Tsushima, and the smaller islands beside it, being of great military importance, are naturally closed to vessels under foreign flags; but south and southwest of these are other groups of islands, some of them of a considerable area. Upon these the Captain set his heart, and at his request their names were inserted in the *Fukuin Maru's* cruising permit issued at the beginning of his work, although it was many years before he could make his first visit there. This portion of his parish he has named the *Sei-Nambu* or Southwestern Division.

"Pass out of Shimonoseki Straits, steer southwest seventy miles, and you reach the Iki Island group; keep on and you reach the Hirado, Upper Goto and Lower Goto groups in succession. The latter lie seventy miles west of Nagasaki; and the

four groups constitute the Southwestern Division. There are here some seventy islands, large and small. Thrown up in some terrible upheaval in the dim past, their rock-bound shores have carried on the battle with gale and wave until they appear as stern sentinels forbidding approach."

Captain Bickel describes the scenery of these open sea islands as being exceedingly wild and romantic. Deep fiords, like those of the coast of Norway, extend far in among the hills, affording fine anchorage for vessels, and infinite delight to the lover of nature. Travellers by boat from Shimonoseki to Nagasaki enjoy glimpses of the shores and hills of these islands, first sighting Iki on the starboard, and later running between Hirado and the Upper Gotos as the ship swings round for Nagasaki harbour; but they are practically unexplored territory to Europeans. Some day their wild beauty may make them a favourite resort for tourists, but their interest to us lies in the fact that they are included in the *Fukuin Maru's* visiting list.

IV

ISLAND FOLK

ON the clustered islands of Japan's tiny Mediterranean, islands as lovely in their way as

> "The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece,
> Where burning Sappho loved and sang,"

are the homes, as already mentioned, of a million and a half of people. It has been popularly supposed, and not unnaturally, that the Islanders are chiefly fisher-folk; but this is far from being the case, only a small proportion of them winning their livelihood with net and line. Fish, indeed, do not appear to exist in these waters in any great abundance, if the writer may judge from his own vain attempts to lure them to his hook. There are, nevertheless, several varieties of good food fishes, such as the *tai,* or bream, considered a great delicacy, and the *sawara,* a long slender fish, of excellent flavour, which are taken in considerable quantities. Firms that deal in fish have depots at convenient places among the Islands, and to these the fishermen bring their spoils fresh from the nets, and thence they are forwarded as rapidly as possible to the big fish-markets of the chief cities, from which they are again hurried out to the small fish-

dealers who are found in every street. There is no more lively sight in a Japanese city than the little fish-carts, each pushed and pulled by several stalwart young lads, being rushed on their way, with much whooping and shouting. As fish is the every-day meat of the Japanese people the fisheries are an important industry, wherever carried on; but the most valuable are on the northern coasts, where such staple food-fish as herring, cod, mackerel and salmon abound, the southern waters being less productive. The Islanders also gather large quantities of other marine animals, such as shell-fish, sea-slugs and octopus. The sea-slug is a particularly unattractive creature, looking about as toothsome as a toad. As for the octopus, to see him crawling around in a fish-tub, with his livid white body, snaky tentacles and wicked, protruding eyes, is anything but an appetizing spectacle. But boiled, sliced, and served with vinegar and horse-radish he is sufficiently palatable and wholesome, and the missionary on country tour finds him a welcome addition to his rice and omelet.

The chief industry on the Islands, as in all Japan, is farming, of that laborious, intensive, market-garden type which seeks to coax the largest possible yield from a limited amount of available land. Horses and cattle are almost unknown, modern farming implements and machines are of course undreamed of, human muscle, with primitive tools and methods, being the sole dependence. In seeding, cultivating, harvesting and milling the Islanders follow the tradition of the elders, but by industry and frugality are able to make a living. Sugar growing is an important branch of agri-

culture. Many are occupied in the manufacture of soy and macaroni; in the production of salt from sea-water; in the weaving of matting and of cotton cloth, or in braiding straw for hats. There are many quarries, where the granite of the mountains is cut out in great blocks, and sent by boat to distant cities. In every village of any importance one finds of course the doctor, the school-teacher, the postmaster, the policeman, and others who sit in the seats of the mighty, as well as tradesmen and artisans of various kinds.

After what has been said above it is not necessary to remark that the Island Folk are by no means savages or barbarians, like the inhabitants of many of the Pacific islands when missionary work was begun among them; though a traveller happening upon a fleet of the unpainted, rakish-looking fishing-boats, their stalwart, naked, copper-hued crews drawing their seines to the rhythm of some wild chorus, might mistake them for such. Being Japanese, all the Islanders, including the fishermen, are civilized. They live in frame houses and dress in the product of the loom. The courtesies and amenities of social life are not strange to them. Their communities are organized and policed, and enjoy a fairly good postal and telegraph service. Most of the people have at least the elements of education, and public schools are within the reach of the children of most of the Islands, though the buildings and the methods of instruction may leave something to be desired. It may fairly be said that the Islands lag behind the rest of Japan in industrial, educational and social advancement.

The general impression a visitor gets as he goes from village to village, and enters the homes of the people, is of poverty, though not abject poverty, and there are some who according to Japanese standards are very comfortably off.

For the most part, like other Japanese, the Islanders are a quiet, sensible, industrious, law-abiding people. Pirates are not unknown, and Captain Bickel has occasionally been exposed to danger from this source; but owing to strict police surveillance they do not become the menace in any part of Japan that they do in Chinese waters. Not that the Chinese are lenient with these gentry when captured. In travelling on the Chinese rivers and canals one sees now and then on the shore a boat sawn asunder. It is the boat of a river-robber, who has doubtless paid with his head for his crimes, and whose boat has been cut in twain and left by the water's edge as a warning to others.

The social evil, which is the shame and curse of Japan, is even more rife among the Islands than elsewhere, and is regarded with a degree of indifference or complacency which is almost incredible. In the case of one community which Captain Bickel mentions as an example of the conditions that prevail in the Islands, when strangers arrive, the daughters in the village homes are summoned by the local authorities, in regular turn, to entertain the visitors, and consider it a privilege and honour to be able in this way to add something to the family income, or even to help an ambitious brother to take a course in the University. Buddhism and Shintoism, though there are many temples and priests on the Islands, do nothing to check

this evil, being entirely destitute of moral or spiritual life. Instead, the priests are notorious for immorality, and the more famous the temple the more numerous the dens of vice that surround it. But all this is true, in hardly less degree, of all Japan.

It will be interesting, here, to have Captain Bickel's description of the people among whom he laboured: "The term 'Islander' has ever stood for independence, the world over. The people here are no exception. Some of the Islands never were under the sway of a feudal lord. Some, until a few years ago, knew no taxation. Thrifty, self-reliant, industrious, they have the faults of their virtues in being proud and self-sufficient. The isolation of many of these Islands is far more extreme than people on the mainland can be persuaded to believe. Thousands of the children have never seen a horse, much less a rickshaw or a railway train. The Mission Ship cannot carry a horse, but does carry a model of a train to show the children. Twenty-one smaller islands in one group have but one post-office among them; in many cases the sick have to be taken in boats to see a doctor, and in probably not more than one out of twenty villages is there an inn of any kind. Accounts all run six months, settlement being made twice a year. Old Calendar reckoning holds almost entire sway, and in some places the hours of the day are still given in the old style periods.

"In spiritual matters the average Islander, having his comprehension dulled by the long-continued influence upon him and his surroundings of religious systems possessing, here at least, no vital

power, his only thought is for material things. All that is ennobling, pure, helpful and uplifting exists for him only in the form of dimly distant impersonal theories. It does not touch his life. Speak to him of theories and he is with you; urge upon him a life according to those theories and he seems to remain untouched. If he be intelligent he despises the priests, whose lives are usually more sordid even than his own. If he is ignorant he lives in dread of what he does not comprehend. Let him but earn money that he may improve his external conditions of life, which as a rule are quite up to the average for Japan, and he feels that all will be well. Buddhism in its many forms; Shintoism, not as a patriotic cultus, but regarded as a religion, with its manifold gods for manifold ills; *Tenrikyo, Kurosumikyo, Tensokyo, Kanamitsukyo*—all have their following; while in many a village the *miko,* or soothsaying women, have more power over the hearts of the people than any one else. Allowing all that is good in Buddhism, it is a sad commentary on its degeneracy in these Islands that in those places in which it is most earnestly adhered to, the people are intellectually, spiritually and morally on the lowest plane."

Tenrikyo, the "Religion of the Heavenly Reason," may be compared to Christian Science, both in its general features, and in having a woman for its founder. It has had a much more rapid spread in Japan than Christian Science has had in America, and has many adherents among the credulous Islanders. The other three superstitions mentioned may be likened to Dowieism, Holy-

Rollerism and other absurd cults that flourish under the shadow of Christianity.

As for the attitude of the Islanders toward the religion of Christ, it could be matched on the mainland only in such out-of-the-way regions as mountain-walled Hida, or the lonely peninsula of Noto. "The Islanders of the Inland Sea," writes Missionary Briggs, of Himeji, who has been long in close touch with the *Fukuin Maru,* and a warm friend and constant helper of her work, "were, when Captain Bickel went to them, truly of one mind in their thought that *Yaso-Kyo* was the worst teaching that could come to Japan. Had not the fathers and forefathers for three hundred years handed down the story of Christian traitors whom the rulers had to crush out of the national life, as deadly serpents must be mercilessly destroyed? Now the day had arrived when the teachers of this long-time forbidden religion were again in Japan. The spirit of toleration might weaken opposition in Tokyo, and the towns of the mainland, but that spirit had not reached the Islands, and they were a unit in their loyal hatred of the traditional enemy."

"The Islanders," to return to the Captain's log, "are thirty years behind the cities of the mainland in general thought and life. The old traditions have stronger hold in such localities, and that Christianity is a teaching to be despised and rejected is a tradition that for three hundred years has been undisputed. 'Christians make bad citizens.' 'Christians worship a separate King, one Jesus.' 'Christianity ruins home life; wives rebel; children despise their parents.' 'Christian rites

are obscene.' 'Christians are political intriguers.' 'Christians eat their dead, or at least a portion of their bodies, and drink the blood.' These and a thousand more are their prejudices."

The name *Yaso*—Jesus—was and still is a word with which mothers frighten naughty children into obedience. When the *Fukuin Maru* made her first call at some of the Islands the children fled in terror, fearing the "tall foreign devil" would kill them and drink their blood, or use their flesh for medicine.

In some places the belief prevailed that when Christians died their bodies were crucified.

"Sorrow came to one evangelist through the death of his child. Painful as it was, he decided to use this event for Christ's cause, if possible. Rumour had it that the child would be mutilated and nails driven through its little hands and feet in the casket. All was prepared. The people came, three hundred strong. The evangelist, father of the little one, gave a heart-moving address on the love of God, and the Christian home. We then invited all present to see the little one, that we might prove the rumours false. Keeping the pressing throng in check with our broad sailor-back, and holding the casket firmly that it might not be overthrown, many were the expressions of surprise we heard, for what they saw was but a dear little child lying amid soft white cushions as if asleep, with a rose held in one hand."

Here and there, far apart, in this dense dark night of ignorance and prejudice, gleamed a dim tiny star; and from the Christian centres on the mainland stole in an occasional misty wavering

gleam of light, that merely served to accentuate the darkness. When the vessel made her first rounds of the Islands a sharp lookout was kept for Christians and persons interested in Christianity. A few, not half a dozen in all perhaps, were discovered who knew something of the Gospel by an experience of its power. They had become believers when visiting the mainland. The writer, when a guest on the ship, had much pleasure in meeting several of these isolated Christians, and from the Captain's lips he heard some pathetic stories of their loneliness and fidelity, almost smothered as they were by the mass of heathenism about them. The coming of the Gospel Ship was to them literally a Godsend, and as a shower of the latter rain. There were found a few, also, who had in some way learned enough about the new faith to make them willing to give it a favourable hearing, but their number was almost negligible. In reporting the work of the vessel for the first year of its service, Captain Bickel wrote, in substance:

"It was our privilege to visit sixty-two islands large and small, holding meetings in some 350 towns and villages. Into these meetings were gathered, at a low estimate, 40,000 different people, and of these assuredly ninety per cent. had never before heard a direct presentation of the Gospel. The knowledge of another five per cent. is on a par with that of a friend last night who was the great man of the occasion because he could claim a previous acquaintance with Christianity. Our friend announced with beaming face that the teaching would be all right, for it consisted in

giving up tobacco and strong drink, and receiving some sort of mysterious power called the Holy Spirit, by which if you knew that your neighbour had a hundred *yen* in the house you need only pray and it would be transferred by magic to your own pocket. But putting smiles aside let me assure you that the need, the desperate need, of these Island people in soul and body is such that but for a sailor's disposition to see the bright side, and a Christian's firm faith in the ultimate triumph of the purposes of an all-wise God for these His lost and erring children, our heart would be sad beyond endurance."

It was to a people that sat in darkness, to them that were in the region and the shadow of death, that the Little White Ship came sailing down the west with her message of light and life.

V

THE LITTLE WHITE SHIP

IN the city of Kobe, near the eastern limit of the *Seto-Nai-Kai,* there stood, on the high ground above the business section, on the *Yama-Naka-Dori,* a missionary home, with windows looking out over the city roofs on the shining waters. Here there dwelt, at the time the tale of the Little White Ship begins, Robert Thomson, a missionary from the land of the heather. He had arrived in Yokohama from Edinburgh in 1884 as an agent of the Scottish Bible Society, but a few years later had joined the Baptist Mission and had been stationed at Kobe. Living close to the Inland Sea, with his field of labour skirting its shores, it is not strange that its Islands and Islanders were often in his thoughts, or that as he sat at his study window looking off into the sunset there came to him again and again the dream of a day when every Island village should have the message of the Cross. And while he dreamed, as we have already seen in part, Providence was preparing a fulfillment of his dream.

The ordinary world-tourist, leaning on the rail of the ocean liner as she threads the narrow waters of the Inland Sea, probably bestows but little thought upon either the material or the spiritual

condition of the people who have their homes on its Islands. He admires the ever varying but always lovely scenery. He views with interest the quaint craft that traverse its waters,—medieval trading vessels, low of prow and lofty of poop; fishing boats with sails ahoist running up to market with the night's catch. He wonders to see steep island slopes tilled to their summits. As for those who sail the ships and cast the nets and cultivate the hills and live in the gray villages, they win scarcely a passing thought. But among many travellers there came one, a woman, who looked out upon the Islands not merely with the eyes of a tourist, but with a heart like His of whom we are told that He had compassion on the multitude. To a dear old lady from Glasgow, who had carried in her thought and prayer the neglected folk of all the little islands of Japan, and through whose Christian liberality the Liu-Chiu Mission was begun, which, however, is another story, the Islanders of the Inland Sea are indebted for the opportunity to hear the Gospel story. It came to them after her earthly travels were ended and God had called her home to Himself. She had the joy of seeing the standard of the Cross set up in the Liu-Chiu capital; but it remained to her son, Mr. Robert Allan, in memory of his saintly and sainted mother, to give effect to her solicitude for the Island Folk of the Inner, as well as of the Outer, Seas.

It was a matter of discussion, indeed, for a time, how these Inland Sea folk might best be reached. The great expense of building, equipping, and running a Mission vessel had to be considered, for mission treasuries are not inexhaustible. It had

been found practicable to carry on a successful, if limited, work in the Liu-Chius by utilizing for missionary travel existing steamship communication between the mainland and the islands, and by stationing Japanese evangelists at important centres. Might not an Inland Sea Mission be prosecuted by making use of the steamship lines which navigate that Sea, and the ferry boats and fishing boats which everywhere abound, and by locating workers on the principal islands? Doubtless something could have been accomplished in that way; but the only hope of a general evangelization of the people scattered over the hundreds of smaller islands, within a reasonable time, was a mission ship. As Captain Bickel remarked, "To seek to evangelize an archipelago without a mission ship would seem akin to clearing a forest without an axe." As at once a sailor and a missionary he bears witness to the close relation between ships and missions:

"Some one has said, and that in all reverence, that the first Mission Ship was that of Noah. Be that as it may, ships have played a great part in the evangelization of the world. Those who have gone in them have over and over again been called upon to break with the conventional ideas of men, and good men at that. They went forth with a mingled boldness and childlike faith into the regions beyond, such as proved at once the source of bitterest criticism at the outset, and unstinted commendation in the outcome.

"'Loosing from Troas, Paul came with a straight course to Samothracia and the next day to Neapolis.' Men objected, but the call of the great and restless deep of men's souls was loud within him. Not all the diffi-

culties of the wide and untried sea of missions to the Gentiles, nor the dangers of an earthly sea, could deter him. A Carey, a Judson, a Livingstone went forth in ships. Fitting indeed was it, nay, it is even now, when a utilitarian spirit too often crowds sentiment to the wall, that the proverbial boldness and simple spirit of the men of the sea should serve the boldness and simple faith of these Columbuses of the Cross of Christ.

"And who shall deny that this earthly barrier of an earthly sea has spoken of the things of God, and had a potent influence over the spirit of the men with the God-given vision of the regions beyond? To some men the sea is but a great ditch and the subject of Christian Missions is no better. To others this greatest of Nature's many mysteries is a veritable forecourt in the temple of their God. What wonder, if these men of large outlook, these messengers of a world-wide religion, should share the experiences of some of those who go down to the sea in ships, and do business on the great waters, and beholding the wonders of their God should go on with renewed faith in His ability to hold them, as well as this great sea of many waters, in the hollow of His hand! Well for the seaman who never loses the impression made upon his soul when first he beheld the vast expanse of God's great deep stretched out before him and resolved to conquer its difficulties! Well indeed for the missionary who ever lives under the influence of the moment when he first had a God-sent vision of the vast expanse of God's love, and the desperate need of human hearts that have wandered afar!

"Most ships have been used in an ordinary way. There have been ships, however, and not a few, which have been used as distinct and direct agencies in the great work of world missions. Who could forget the *John Williams*, the *Camden*, the *Dayspring*, the *Southern Cross*, names that are mentors of the fact that God *lives*? Who can doubt that our God is a prayer-answer-

ing God, or that the Moravian Brethren who sent forth the four successive vessels called *Harmony* did well to put trust in Him, as he reads the strange record of these vessels during one hundred years? Literally, in the words of the grandest of seamen's hymns,

"'From rock and tempest, fire and foe,'

were they protected in their difficult work. These are but a few of many. Then add to these the vessels of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, together with that Greatheart of both the sick-ward and the sea, Dr. Grenfell, and whose soul is not stirred? Could one but have shared the experiences of those who sailed in these vessels, how 'great a cloud of witnesses' to God's wondrous power to guide, protect and comfort those who, for His sake, venture into unbeaten ways would we have!"

Yes, a Gospel Ship is not a new thing under the sun. Among the islands of the mid-Pacific, on the bleak coasts of the north Atlantic, along the sunset shores of America, on the great rivers of Africa and China, the word of truth goes forth over the face of the waters. If some one should write us the tale of the Gospel Navy of the modern world it would make fine reading, a breezy chapter of the romance of missions. But for the whole series of island groups that lie off the coast of eastern Asia, from Kamschatka to the tropics, no Gospel Ship had appeared until the *Fukuin Maru* was launched one summer day in the Bay of Yedo. The writer, being a Blue-Nose, seashore bred, with an inborn love of salt water, had during the early years of his life in Yokohama dreamed of a boat with sails and oars,—it being before the days of motor-

launches,—in which to visit the villages on the shores of Yedo Bay: a dream that faded with the increase of missionary duties nearer home. In recent times the enterprising independent Omi Mission, with headquarters at Hachiman, near the famous and beautiful Lake Biwa, the Galilee of Japan, has placed a Gospel launch on the waters of that lake. The boat is appropriately named the *Garirai Maru*,—the "Galilee," and is of great service in the mission work carried on in the villages beside the lake.

Two years after Mrs. Allan's memorable visit to Kobe, Mr. Robert Allan made to the American Baptist Missionary Union, through Dr. Thomson, an offer to provide means for the building of the vessel needed for the evangelization of the Inland Sea Islanders. Mr. Allan is the worthy son of a worthy mother, and his splendid gift of a mission ship is but one proof of his deep interest in Christian and philanthropic work, as the people of the city of Glasgow can abundantly testify. And, as we shall see hereafter, the gift of the ship was not the last proof of his interest in the Inland Sea work. It goes without saying that the Missionary Society embraced Mr. Allan's offer of a Mission Ship with joy and thankfulness, and we have already seen Providence preparing the man who could be at once the ship's captain and the missionary to the Islanders.

It was May, 1898, when Captain Bickel, with his wife and their little son Philip, arrived in Kobe. It had been intended that while the vessel should be building the Captain and his family should make their home at Chofu, a mission station on the shore

of the Inland Sea, near Shimonoseki. It was found, however, that Yokohama offered the best facilities for building, and after making a preliminary survey of his island parish that was to be, and spending a few months in Kobe in the study of Japanese, he brought his family up to the northern port and made his home there until the vessel was completed, to the great pleasure and profit of all the members of our Yokohama station. We then first made the acquaintance of Captain and Mrs. Bickel, and learned to love them for their own sake, as well as for the sake of the work they had come to do. Captain Bickel's mingled modesty and manliness, strength and gentleness; his deep earnest piety and fine Christian sanity; his friendly spirit; his profound seriousness and wholesome sense of humour; his breezy sailor manner combined with unfailing, instinctive courtesy, won all our hearts.

Meanwhile, his days were busy with the superintending of the building of the vessel and with the study of the Japanese language. Apart from the short time spent at Kobe, these brief months, largely filled as they were with duties connected with the work on the ship, gave the Captain his only opportunity for continuous and systematic study of the language. What was acquired in subsequent days had to be picked up, or absorbed, as best it might amid labours of brain and brawn that more than demanded all available time and strength. Missionary recruits in Japan to-day are required to devote their first three years mainly to language study, following a carefully prepared curriculum under expert teachers, and are to be con-

gratulated if they succeed during that time in becoming somewhat at home in this most difficult tongue. To acquire, without such helps, within a year, a sufficient use of the language to manage a Japanese crew, converse with Japanese evangelists, and hold any communication with Islanders who knew no language but the every-day vernacular, was possible only to a man of Captain Bickel's ability. He must have had a natural taste for, and facility in, the acquiring of languages, as in addition to English he could speak German, Dutch, French, Spanish, and one or two other tongues. To this inborn faculty for language, and to the constant contact with the Japanese people into which his life among the islands brought him, he owed the somewhat remarkable fluency with which he became able to speak their tongue, both in conversation and in public address.

It was in a little shipyard, or rather a rude ship-building shed at Honmoku Beach, on the outskirts of Yokohama, that the Little White Ship came into being. The plans had been furnished by a very distinguished ship's architect of Glasgow, the designer of the famous yacht *Valkyrie*. The building of the ship went on under the scrupulously careful supervision of the Captain himself, who examined every bolt and timber, but the actual constructor and builder was an experienced foreign shipwright, a Mr. Cook, whom Captain Bickel had discovered in Yokohama: one of the interesting personages whom fortune brings together in the foreign community of that city. Mr. Cook, though not a man to be painfully concerned for the souls of the benighted heathen, happened to have a ship-

wright's love for a clean job, and put honest work and sound timber into the little vessel. If she had been intended for the hunting of sea-otters along the wintry Kuriles, or to carry whiskey and tobacco to the southern seas, doubtless he would have displayed the same thoroughness. Or may it be that under an assumed indifference to the missionary destination of the vessel there was a half unconscious wish to serve his Maker and mankind by putting all his heart, and the skill won during many years as shipwright, into this task which Providence had brought to his hand in life's fading afternoon? A year of daily association with so sincere and transparent a Christian, so manly a missionary-mariner as our Captain Bickel, might well awaken all that was best in a man's heart. And he was a man of a good heart, was Shipwright Cook. The writer, having been born and bred, as aforesaid, beside the salt water, and with an abiding love for tar and oakum, took delight in wandering about the ship as it gradually rose into being, and cherishes a friendly memory of the rugged old ship-builder.

The contract for building the vessel was signed October 15th, and presently the Captain was able to report that the keel had been laid, and that the little Honmoku shipyard was alive with busy men: the little sturdy, quick-witted, deft-fingered Japanese ship-carpenters. She was to carry a precious cargo, and must weather many a wild storm upon dangerous waters, and therefore needed to be as staunchly built as choice material and human skill would permit. "Strength, utility and neatness were alone considered in building, all ornamenta-

tion being avoided." But never was a prettier sight on the Four Seas of Japan than this dainty, lady-like little vessel, with her fine lines, her pure white hull and sails, and everything as spick and span about her as in a millionaire's yacht. Her very simplicity, beauty and purity made her a part of the Gospel of the fair white Christ, whose messengers she was to bear.

The best available materials went into the little ship. All timbers, strakes and deadwoods were of the best hard woods that grow in the forests of Japan, including the beautiful and costly *keyaki*, the mahogany of Japan; while decks and planking, and her larger spars, were of Oregon pine, the smaller spars being of *hinoki*, another valuable Japanese wood. The hull was copper-fastened and copper-sheathed. From stem to stern-post she measured seventy-five feet, with a length over all of eighty-five, and was seventeen feet in the beam, her carrying capacity being eighty-two tons. In rig she was a two-masted fore-and-aft schooner, with fine lofty spars and a splendid spread of canvas when under full sail. She was registered at Lloyds with the highest rating, "Star A1, 10 years." The 'tween-decks was entirely taken up with cabins and forecastle, providing accommodation for the missionary-captain and his family, as well as for one or more Japanese evangelists and the seven members of the crew. There was also a cozy stateroom for an occasional guest, and to be a guest on the vessel for a few days or a few weeks was something to be long anticipated and longer remembered, with pleasure.

In July, 1899, the vessel was ready for launch-

ing. The sea bottom at Honmoku Beach stretches out shoal and flat. In the days when Yedo Bay was the usual baptistry for the Yokohama Baptist Church, the administrator of the ordinance often had to lead the candidates far out through the shallow water to find depth sufficient for baptizing; and a cold experience it was wading back and forth, in winter months, with a bitter wind on the shallows. Even at high tide it must have been a work of toil and patience to get the vessel afloat. A few weeks sufficed to step the masts, rig the shrouds, bend the sails, and put everything in readiness for her maiden voyage.

On September 13th the Dedicatory Service was held. The name "*Fukuin Maru,*" which was to become a household word not only to the Islanders of the Inner and Outer Seas, but to multitudes in America and other lands, was the happy suggestion of the writer's brother, then also a missionary in Yokohama, who, with the born love of a Blue-Nose for the sea and all that sails on it, had been deeply interested in the construction of the vessel. It is pronounced *Foo-Koo-een Màh-roo,* with the last syllable, *roo,* very short and unaccented, and means "The Gospel," "The Glad Tidings," or the "Ship of the Good News." Truly in God's good providence the little vessel was to prove a bearer of glad tidings to many a dark and comfortless heart.

On the ship's deck that day were gathered not only many members of the Baptist Mission, but representatives of other missions as well. In describing the event some years later Captain Bickel wrote: "One friend of another Mission unconsciously foretold the facts of the present day when

Old *Fukuin Maru* in cove at Miyanoura, Omi Shima

she called the little white craft 'Our Ship.' It is indeed 'our ship,' in the highest sense, for all Christians in Japan, and it gives joy to the hearts of those most concerned, to have abundant proof that the results of the vessel's humble efforts are not represented by the converts on the ship's roll alone, but are found in the churches of other denominations, in far-off cities."

The *Fukuin Maru* meant to the Inland Sea Mission much more than a means of transportation. Mention has already been made of the impression she was fitted to make on the minds of an Island people, familiar with marine affairs, by her beauty, her neatness and purity, the absolute order that prevailed on her, in a word her shipshapeness. A dirty and slovenly vessel might sail through the Island channels, but could not sail into the hearts of the Island people. Captain Bickel's passion for system, order, and neatness made it sure that the little white ship would be always as spick and span as on the day of her dedication. It meant something to the success of the work that the "Jesus Ship," which was to be to the Islanders a representation of the Christian religion, an embodiment in wood and canvas of the spirit of the new teaching, came to them with the charm of beauty and purity, a fitting messenger of the stainless Christ, the One altogether lovely. It would be well if not only every mission vessel, but every mission building, and every Christian church edifice, possessed this charm. An outsider remarked of a certain ill-sextoned meeting-house, "People could hardly have clean thoughts in such a dirty room," and the author of "The Builders" has said,

"Make the house where God may dwell
Beautiful, entire and clean."

Such, at least, was the *Fukuin Maru,* the Bethel of the Inland Sea, whose cabin and deck were to be made sacred by many an assembly for worship and for the preaching of the Word, and by the presence of the Lord; for the ship was a Mission Hall, and a House of Worship, and the workshop and office of the mission force. Captain Bickel, after speaking of various activities of the ship, adds:

"There is one more important Mission asset which is not so easily understood. It is the influence of the vessel itself. That it provides a means of transportation for the workers, and a place in which to find rest and clean food after the unsanitary conditions of crowded meetings on shore, is in itself a sufficient justification for the vessel's use. But this is far from being all. As the ship lies at anchor or passes through the channels, she is seen and is well known to the people in the villages and fields and woods on the mountainside. Reminding them of the last meeting, the last Christian newspaper, or the last personal talk, she preaches a perennial wordless sermon, and is to them a token of the love and self-denial of Christian hearts. The ship is, moreover, a Christian home brought to the very doors of thousands of Christless homes. Just think what would be the added power in the hands of the missionary engaged in country work, if in some way, instead of putting up at inns, he were able to take with him his home, and, inviting into it thousands of those whom he meets, could let them feel the subtle influence of a Christian home life!"

Every missionary home, indeed, even if not peripatetic, is for its neighbourhood at least an object lesson in true religion. How ignorant the heathen are of what a true home should be may be illustrated by the case of a Japanese, an intelligent and respectable man, who was having a friendly chat with a missionary in one of those up-country hotels. Learning, in answer to his courteous inquiries about the missionary's family, that they were spending some years in the home-land, he sympathized with the loneliness the missionary must feel, and naively added, "But of course in the meantime you have taken a Japanese wife." He was probably familiar with the reputation of non-Christian foreigners in the port cities.

Except when the season prevented, Mrs. Bickel and the children accompanied the Captain on his mission cruises. The utmost use was made of their floating home to promote the interests of the work. Thousands, many thousands, of the Islanders, have been invited into that home, and have drunk tea in the little cabin, which was dining-room, sitting-room, drawing-room, music-room, work-room and chart-room, as well as chapel, and have curiously examined the tiny cabins which served as bedrooms, and the galley which must be kitchenette for all the ship's company. Day by day, as the ship shifted her anchorage from island to island, they came in their gray, unpainted, weather-stained boats, from the neighbouring villages—officials, teachers and doctors, dignified and well-dressed; farmers and fishermen in their rough working clothes; and a rabble of women and children, often unclean and unkempt, but orderly

enough in their behaviour, according to the canons of etiquette recognized on the Islands, to do the "worshipful seeing." Politely welcomed at the hospitable ladder, the front door-step, so to speak, they enjoyed a personally conducted tour of the ship, and when they were politely farewelled at the ladder again, and had pushed off for shore, they took with them, along with some simple tracts, an admiration for the neatness and the many conveniences of the vessel, and an appreciation of the kind ways of the tall foreign Captain and his wife. Well for the ship's company if nothing undesirable was left behind, for many of the Islanders are in their own persons the happy hunting ground, or rather pasture, of certain little beasties which are not mentioned in polite conversation. The lady of the ship would have been more than human, would have been lacking indeed in housewifely and motherly instincts, had she not sometimes inwardly protested against the daily invasion, and frequent pollution, of her little home; and it must have needed constant fresh supplies of grace, to be willing, for the sake of the cause, to meet each new group with a smile of welcome. There was true heroism in this for one of womanly tastes, reared in an English home. It was taking up the cross daily.

Such, then, was the Little White Ship, and such, in part, was the function she was to fulfill in the making known of the Gospel of the grace of God to the Island Folk, on that fair afternoon in September, when a little company of missionaries and Japanese Christians stood on her deck, and committed her to the keeping and blessing of God.

A little ship puts out to sea;
A precious burthen she doth bear.
"Now God," I pray, "be good to me,
My heart goes sailing there."

A little ship she sails the sea;
I follow, follow with my prayer.
"May God," I pray, "be good to me,
My heart goes sailing there."

A little ship is far at sea;
The storm grows wild, the night falls drear.
"Dear Lord," I pray, "be good to me,
My heart goes sailing there."

The little ship hath crossed the sea;
I give God thanks with heart sincere.
"Thou hast been good, dear God, to me,
My heart went sailing there."

VI

HER MAIDEN VOYAGE

TWO bells, of the morning watch. Fuji, the Sacred Mountain, stands bathed in purple dawn, looking down across the Hakonè Hills upon the silver stretches of Tokyo Bay. In Yokohama Harbour sampans and lighters are pushing off from the wharves to begin the day's business. Flocks of white gulls are flying lazily over the waters, looking for breakfast. Off toward east and south are the white-sailed *sakana-bunè* of the fisher-lads of Negishi, also out looking for breakfast.

Two bells, of the morning watch. It sounds out from a score of ocean-going steamers, hailing from every part of the world, which are moored in the inner harbour. On the *Fukuin Maru,* too, lying beyond the breakwater, the two bells strikes, sweet and clear, like a cheerful good-bye to the friends on shore. On her deck the sailors, looking very trim in their new white uniforms, are hoisting sail and anchor, adding their strong chanty to the noise of ropes and chains. The Little White Ship is starting on her maiden voyage.

The *Gleaner,* the motor-launch of the Mission to Seamen, has come out from her moorings at the foot of Main Street to see her younger and fairer sister in Gospel work safely off, and having given

her a friendly tow down the Bay as far as the light-ship, bids her Godspeed and returns, while the *Fukuin Maru* plumes her white wings and shapes her course for the open water. Her destination is the port of Hiogo, which adjoins Kobe, at the eastern end of the Inland Sea.

Her first voyage was to be an exciting one, because of a typhoon into whose fringe she ran off the wild coast of Kii. Let us have the story in the Captain's own words:

"It was a bad time of year, and the barometer began to fall after we left, but we had a good run down the gulf and round the coast into the Kii Channel. We made sometimes five miles, sometimes twelve, per hour. We ran neck and neck on the Tuesday morning with the steamer *Otaru Maru* for several hours. We averaged 'to the good' nine miles an hour until within fifty miles of Kobe, with a fair prospect of getting in on Tuesday evening, when it began to blow and the sea rose. Well, the upshot of it was that I spent five days over the other fifty miles, and days of hard work. We had three struggles during that time, beat up into the Gulf of Osaka three times, and had to run out before a gale as many times. The last gale was very heavy, and after twelve hours of hard beating and straining to keep my ground I had to give in and run out through the Tennis Straits again in the night. It thundered, it rained, it fairly howled, and the sea ran high, and by flashes of vivid lightning I picked my way through the passage. It was a grand sight though, and all through the vessel behaved splendidly. Twice during those five days I had to beat off a lee shore, and once

drifted down to within ten feet of a rock bed in a dead calm. When we got into Hiogo Bay, and I got my clothes off and into bed for the first time in a week, I could not help feeling grateful for the experience. After a few hours' rest I got up hale and hearty, and congratulated myself on having had it out with the young lady at the very outset and once for all."

Thus far the Captain's log. Many a day in the years that followed, when typhoon gales have swept the Island shores, or on wild and rainy nights when difficult and dangerous channels, unlighted and uncharted, had to be navigated, was there like need of utmost alertness and endurance of mind and body.

The difficulty of the voyage from Yokohama to Hiogo, and of all the early navigating of the vessel, was much enhanced by the inexperience and unreliability of the crew. Perhaps few, if any, of them had ever helped to handle a foreign style sailing ship, or had much idea of foreign methods of navigation. Add to this the fact that the Captain's knowledge of Japanese was yet fragmentary, while his crew had no use of English except of such nautical terms as had been naturalized. This would make communication between the skipper and his crew very laborious. The men would lack, too, that experience of strict discipline, and that habit of instant obedience to orders, which would be a matter of course with a British crew. The Captain would need to forestall and supplement the deficiency of the men at every turn. To bring a little sailing craft through a typhoon storm, past a dangerous coast, with a raw crew,

seems a veritable feat of seamanship. The Captain used to remark, in recounting the adventures of this voyage, that he could not repress a smile when he recalled the well-meant advice of the Mission Board to lay the burden of navigation chiefly on the crew, reserving his own strength for more spiritual service; and would add that unless the seagoing part of the Japanese people were made over in mind, soul and body, he feared it would be a long day before he would be able to follow that advice. How there came a day when the Japanese mariners who manned the Little White Ship had become all that the skipper could have desired, and more than he could have dared to hope, will be told in the appropriate place.

Besides the Captain and the seven sailors who formed his crew, there was one passenger who made this tempestuous voyage: the single evangelist with whom the Captain planned to begin his work, and who had been commended to his tender mercies at Yokohama. What this poor fellow, a mere landlubber and no hardy salt, endured during those wild days and nights off the coast of Kii, we will not attempt to portray.

VII

IN HIOGO BAY

TO bring the *Fukuin Maru* to port at Hiogo was one thing; to weigh anchor again and sail off down to the Islands was a different story. It was not an easy matter to secure from the Japanese Imperial Government permission to move about at will in what was properly a *mare clausum*. The ocean liners were indeed allowed, under proper pilotage, to traverse these closed waters between Kobe and Moji, on the appointed tracks; but it was another matter to permit a foreign vessel, owned by a foreign Society, flying a foreign flag, and under a foreign skipper, to sail those waters at will. One of the great naval bases, also, that of Kure, is located here, and there are other points of military importance. Might not a foreign captain abuse the privilege of free navigation, and quietly collect information of military value, to be employed, in case of war, against Japan?

Captain Bickel had duly sent in his application for a sailing permit, through Colonel Buck, the United States minister, and Colonel Buck had forwarded it to the Japanese Foreign Office. After the lapse of a fortnight word came that matters of this kind must be referred to the Minister of Com-

munication. A fresh application was accordingly made out and forwarded as advised. Another fortnight passed. Then came word that the application was couched in too general terms, and that every place which it was intended the ship should visit must be specified by name. As this meant practically every inhabited island and every seaside village in the Inland Sea, to say nothing of the outlying island groups, it required considerable time to compile the list. The new application, with its formidable queue of names, was sent in, and Captain Bickel had a farther period in which to practice the virtue of patience. In the meantime he went up to Tokyo and passed an examination for captain's certificate before the proper Japanese authorities, so that if the government should object to a ship under a foreign flag having the freedom of the Inland Sea he could sail her under the Japanese flag.

It would have been some sacrifice to him to haul down "Old Glory," and run up the Sun Banner in its stead, for he was American born and bred, and a true American at heart in his democratic and cosmopolitan ideas; but for the sake of the work even "Old Glory" would have to go. As a matter of fact it was the Captain's idea that because of the peculiarly friendly relations which had always existed between the United States and Japan, the Stars and Stripes at her masthead would be a happy introduction for her to the Island villages; and on the other hand he hoped that the ministry of mercy and good-will which the vessel was to accomplish would add something to the kindly feeling of the Japanese for the American people.

One of the by-products of missionary work is the lessening of friction between western and eastern nations. Every missionary is an ambassador of peace, civil as well as spiritual. His probity, kindliness and helpfulness heal the wounds which the haughtiness, selfishness and greed of too many foreign traders and officials have inflicted. His little company of friends and disciples have learned to love him, and some of that love is extended even to the country from which he has come. If peace and good-will are to continue between Japan and America, as is devoutly to be wished, it will be due in part to the many hundreds of American missionaries scattered over the Empire, each constantly and unconsciously "taking up the shock" of every untoward impact of America upon Japan. It would be easy to show that the influence of the work of the *Fukuin Maru* in this respect has been very great, not only among the Islanders but in the Empire at large, so great indeed, that this alone would repay all the expense of the undertaking. Not more war-ships, nor wiser diplomacy, but more lavish missionary effort, is the solution of the question how to keep the peace between East and West.

Another reason for sailing the Mission Ship under the American flag would be the warmer place this would give her in the hearts of those who supported her work. While the ship herself was the gift of a Scottish ship-owner, her sailing expenses, and the cost of the work generally, had to come from the hands of Americans, the money being largely contributed by the Sunday schools. The romance of the Inland Sea Mission appealed to the

Captain Bickel, family, and crew

boys and girls, and they took a livelier interest in the ship because she flew the Stars and Stripes.

While the *Fukuin Maru* tugged at her moorings in Hiogo Bay, impatient to be off, Captain Bickel and the Japanese evangelist who had shipped with him were by no means idle. The anchorage at Hiogo is a regular rendezvous for Inland Sea sailing vessels, and this was made avail of to scatter the first handfuls of Gospel seed upon the waters, and at the same time to advertise the ship and its purpose among those to whom she was to go. "We are holding meetings on board," wrote the Captain at this time, "for the crews of these vessels, going to them beforehand and giving them a personal invitation. We tell them of the purpose of the vessel, and if they cannot come on board now to look out for us down among the Islands. To most of the men the whole subject of Christianity and the motive underlying our action seem to be new, and the motive gives food for thought. By visiting half a dozen junks and schooners during the day, all of which are within hailing distance, I can get enough hearers for the evening to fill the little cabin, say twenty or thirty, and as these vessels come and go continually we get a fresh lot of men. Coming as they do to us as our guests, as it were, we have a great advantage in maintaining proper order."

So presently there were scores of native craft of various kinds of rig beating up and down among the Islands, carrying word to their home harbours or to whatever ports they happened to touch at, of a little white American vessel lying down east at Hiogo, with a tall foreign skipper and a Japanese

crew, which vessel was about to come down among the Islands to teach the people about *Yaso* and the foreigners' God. At least that was what was pretended. What mischief she might really be up to no one could tell, and it was rather strange that the Honourable Government of Great Japan should permit her to come to the Islands at all. For all anybody knew she might be spying for Russia, Japan's traditional enemy, for all she had the American flag flying. The captain was a fierce looking man, dressed in a uniform, and more like a soldier than a priest. And, anyway, the Islanders had more religion than they knew what to do with, already, what with the good old-fashioned home-made Shinto, and the teachings of Confucius from China, and of Buddha from India. It was quite too much to have a new-fangled religion, of an American god, thrust upon them. But the vessel would be down along by and by, and they could hear for themselves.

After lying at anchor for about ten weeks the coveted permit arrived, duly signed and sealed. It happened to be the American Thanksgiving Day, and was doubly a Thanksgiving Day to the skipper of the little ship because he held the precious document safe in his hand. According to its terms the vessel, flying the American flag, might navigate freely the Inland Sea, outside of certain fortified areas, and visit at will the appended list of places. At the same time, or soon afterward, the Department of Communication took a step which did not become known to Captain Bickel until later, but which proved of comfort and help to him in the early years of his work. Communica-

tions were sent out from the Department to police and other officials at the places mentioned in the ship's permit, advising them of the purpose of the little vessel, and requiring them to afford the Captain such help and protection as circumstances might call for. This was doubtless intended rather as an act of courtesy to the American Government than as a sign of approval of Christianity; but it at least served to give the Captain and his ship a favourable introduction to those in authority on the Islands.

On December 2, 1899, the blue peter was run up, the anchor brought home, and the sails spread for the Harima Nada, among the islands of which the Little White Ship was to make her first mission cruise.

VIII

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

WHEN the *Fukuin Maru* cleared from Hiogo Harbour that memorable December day, her sole visible cargo was a good stock of Bibles, Scripture portions, tracts and other Christian literature, ammunition for her campaign among the Islands, snugly stored away in the lockers in the Captain's cabin, which lockers were also the chairs, sofas and lounges for the Captain and his family. On the cabin table lay spread charts of the Inland Sea waters, prepared by the Japanese Admiralty, not so complete nor so accurate as might have been desired, but still indispensable. And somewhere on board, perhaps only in the Captain's heart, and not yet set down in black and white, was the Plan of Campaign, which had a vital connection with these same admiralty charts, or rather with the Inland Sea geography and hydrography which the charts displayed.

During the year and a half that had elapsed since he had first set foot on Japanese soil, Captain Bickel had been making a study of the whole situation that faced him in his wide parish, and determining the principles which should govern

his work. In this lies one cause of the success that has crowned that work. There has been no "muddling through" in the Inland Sea Mission. It has been a campaign with a plan, a carefully thought out and well digested plan, reasonable, elastic, workable, and pursued with unfaltering fidelity, and has thus been in fine contrast to the happy-go-lucky, hit-or-miss, zeal-without-knowledge kind of work with which too many of us whose fields are on the mainland have contented ourselves. The orderly, systematic and thorough methods of the Inland Sea enterprise have made it a good object lesson for those who are undertaking the evangelization of the rural districts.

By this we do not mean to say that Captain Bickel sailed out of Hiogo Bay with a detailed and complicated cast-iron system of rules and methods to which all the activities of the vessel must be conformed. He had far too much hard horse sense to commit any such folly. What he did have was a broad outline to be filled out as circumstances should need and experience should guide. "He came with simple principles: that he was entrusted by God with a message for this people; that he was to go to unoccupied fields only; that his message was for all the people, not for classes; and that every Christian should be a worker." There is nothing out of the ordinary, in missionary work, in these principles, thus expressed. Except perhaps for the second, they are the commonplaces of mission policy. What is noteworthy is that Captain Bickel took these general principles, applied them to the circumstances of his parish, and set them down, in terms suited to those circumstances,

as the outline of his method of campaign, and held to that outline, filling in the details of course as need arose, through all the nineteen years of his work. That he attached great importance to this outline, and great importance to method and system in the prosecution of his mission is abundantly evident from his writings.

The method of the Inland Sea Enterprise, and the striking success of that method thoroughly and persistently applied, afford to all engaged in rural evangelism a valuable suggestion and stimulus, and this is one of the most important by-products of the *Fukuin Maru* Mission. It is this, together with the splendid example of consecration and devotion which Captain Bickel's missionary activities displayed, which has widened his influence from the scattered islands of the Inland Sea to the utmost bounds of the Mikado's Empire, and beyond, into other mission fields. In a very large sense he was not only Captain Bickel of the Inland Sea, but Captain Bickel of Japan.

Stated in Captain Bickel's own words his mission strategy was as follows:

1. We will never go to *any* place in which *any one* of *any* denomination has *any* work. The work shall all be advance work.
2. We will go to *every* place on *every* island, and persist in Christian effort until by general consent of the people the vessel and its message are welcome.
3. While giving honour to whom honour is due we will bear in mind at all times that the Gospel is for all men alike, irrespective of class distinctions.
4. After ensuring a welcome, to divide the islands into groups. Stationing an evangelist in each group,

make him responsible for all work carried on in his group.

5. To insist that the number of paid workers in a given district be limited, and upon the duty of every believer to bear a share in the work of spreading the Gospel by personal activity of some kind.

Such was the plan of campaign, to cover many strenuous years, with which the *Fukuin Maru* began her first cruise in the Inland Sea.

It may be permitted, however, before taking up the thread of our narrative, to call attention to one or two special features of the work as it was afterward actually carried on. One of these was the emphasis laid upon the orderly, progressive, systematic presentation of Christian truth to the people of each village on the ship's visiting list. "The addresses at the public meetings are all carefully planned and systematized, one, two, three. The literature is carefully selected and graded, one, two, three again." Even the Scriptures were not to be circulated generally till the people had been sufficiently instructed to read them with intelligence and profit. In fact the audience in each village was to be a big class in Christian doctrine, meeting infrequently indeed but making steady progress in the knowledge of the Way of Life from year to year.

Another notable feature has been the attention paid to the conservation of results. What is gained is gained by hard, hard work, and must be held at all costs. If a village is persuaded to open its doors to the Teaching those doors must never be allowed to shut. If a man begins to show interest

in the Gospel story he must never be lost sight of until he is added to the number of those who believe. When a believer is gained it is considered as important to hold him as to secure a new recruit. System, thoroughness, perseverance, conservation, these were the words that on the human side were to govern the activities of the little vessel.

[*Note.* For the benefit of missionary readers, and of others interested in methods of foreign mission work, it may be mentioned that Captain Bickel has set forth in detail his Plan of Campaign in an address before a company of missionaries and other Christian workers at Karuizawa, on "Rural Evangelization," and in various writings. These may be found in the *Christian Movement in Japan*, the Japan *Evangelist*, and other missionary publications.]

IX

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

WHEN Captain Bickel stood under the blue peter on the morning of the second day of December, 1899, and gave orders to hoist anchor and sails for the first mission cruise in the Inland Sea, it was with no rosy anticipations of immediate success. "I will work day and night, as God may give me strength, for ten years without looking for visible results," he wrote at that time to the Home Board. And, indeed, the field being what it was, and the plan of work so far reaching as it was, it showed optimism to expect results so early. In the chapters upon the Inland Sea and the Island Folk some idea has been given of the difficulties that had to be encountered, due both to the physical nature of the territory to be occupied, and to the mental and moral condition of the people. After describing some of these difficulties, in an article from which paragraphs are there quoted, Captain Bickel adds:

"Such then was the field to which the little Mission Ship went. Is it so great wonder that the writer, upon whom lay the burden of the going and doing, shrank from his task? A strange language, a strange people, an unknown and difficult sea to

navigate almost entirely without guiding lights, and wholly without a pilot,—for none has ever been used,—no knowledge of the Islands, much less of where and how many were the villages upon them, not knowing a single soul in any of them, where to begin and what method to adopt, was indeed a problem."

In another article, published in 1911, speaking retrospectively of the entrance of the *Fukuin Maru* upon her field of labour, he says:

"There was nothing but a little white ship picking her way among the islands at the eastern end of the Inland Sea. The night was dark, very dark, as she crawled up under the still darker shadow of a high mountain and dropped anchor. Not only was the night dark, but the prospects before us were darker still. The difficulties seemed as high as the high mountain under which the little ship lay, and truly they were. I was among a strange people of whose language I did not know enough to ask for bread and butter, had there been any, which there was not. The islands, the towns and villages, the mountain paths, the channels and sweeping tides, the rocks and shoals and winds, all these were unknown, untried. But above all, not a soul did I know in this wide stretch of islands, the hearts of whose hundreds of thousands I had been sent to try to reach. So the night was dark indeed, and the misgivings of your old sailor friend made it seem darker still."

The mere secular side of the work,—the sailing of the vessel in new and difficult waters; the handling of the Japanese crew—every man-jack of them an incontrovertible proof of the doctrine of

total depravity, and yet to be treated with that urbanity and deference which *Yamato-Damashii*, the Soul-of-Japan, expects of every respectable foreigner; the hard bone labour on shore, tramping the mountain paths, thousands of miles of them in the aggregate, from village to village; the frequently tedious search for a house where meetings might be held, and the laborious advertising of these meetings by word of mouth from door to door,—would have been sufficient exercise for one husky man. And upon this, like Ossa piled on Pelion, was the tremendous load of the spiritual part of the campaign, the responsibility for a million and a half of people, intellectually depressed, superstitious, morally inert, stubbornly conservative, hostile to or suspicious of the Captain and all his works, dwelling in a thousand scattered villages that must be besieged and captured one by one, and all these to be found and won and led and fed, and for it all just one little white schooner picking her way painfully from island to island, and pacing her deck a restless stranger from the West, who must be both skipper and missionary. Well, yes, and there was God. The Captain happened to know this, and that saved the situation.

"Ten years without visible results, if God will," said the Captain in his heart, as the little white schooner rounded the northern end of Awaji, and stood away across the Harima Nada for the first island on the ship's visiting list. It was, as already intimated, not merely the difficulties of the field, but also the plan of campaign adopted, that broad comprehensive scheme outlined in the previous chapter, which led him to set so distant a date.

It would have been, humanly speaking, a matter of no great difficulty to have secured several scores or hundreds of converts within a few years, with a less equipment in men and means than Captain Bickel had at command, by following the usual method of evangelism, the good old Pauline method indeed, of selecting certain strategic points and concentrating effort upon these until the work should be securely planted, and a considerable number of converts gathered. From these points the Gospel would then, in a natural and almost inevitable way, penetrate into the regions round about, until they too were evangelized. Paul laid himself out upon such strategic centres as Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth. Missionaries in Japan have established themselves in the chief cities, Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, and a hundred other important centres. There they have concentrated their efforts, giving comparatively little attention to the surrounding rural districts. Win the town, and the town will win the country, has been their motto. As goes Tokyo, so goes the Empire, was the word of the wise. This policy had two results. The first was, that in a comparatively short time, as a rule, a considerable number of converts was gathered at these centres. The second was, that the rural districts are yet almost untouched by the Gospel. After sixty years of missionary effort there is a flourishing work in almost every city and principal town in Japan, but four-fifths of the people of the countryside, in village and hamlet, are still waiting for the message of the Cross. The great problem now before our mission forces, and the great task of the next few decades, is the evan-

gelization of the rural communities. If these communities are to be evangelized within this generation the gradual seeping out of Christianity from the cities must be supplemented by a definite, serious attempt to present the claims of Christ to the country folk. The leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened may have been placed in a small mass in the strategic centre of the bulk of flour, but more likely was thoroughly distributed through it, as we mix yeast in our dough. In either case it would be but a question of time till the whole was leavened; but the distributed leaven would fulfill its purpose the more quickly. No doubt Paul's missionary strategy was masterly, nay, of divine suggestion, and the most successful possible in his circumstances and in the then condition of the world; and those who have copied that strategy in modern missions have for the most part found it yield good results. In Captain Bickel's case, however, the very unusual conditions obtaining in his field, in that it was an island parish, a parish of scattered islands, without much intercommunication, each island a little world by itself, made it essential that each island be brought within the direct influence of the vessel's work. Therefore our Captain, instead of confining his efforts to a few populous islands, like Shozu or Ikuchi, or a few important towns, like Setoda and Tonosho, leaving the other hundreds of islands, with their thousand villages, to receive the Gospel second-hand, in some misty future, felt it incumbent on him, so far as it was not a physical impossibility, to begin work in all the islands, in all the villages, from the very

first, and to carry it forward uniformly over the whole field. That element of Paul's strategy, and of mission strategy generally, which was suited to Inland Sea conditions, he incorporated into his plan, by selecting a strategic centre in each group of islands, after the first rounds of his parish had been made, and establishing there a nucleus of Christian work, with the arrangement, however, that from that centre systematic work should be carried on, so far as the workers' strength permitted, in every village in the group. Of late years, in missionary circles in Japan, "intensive work" and "concentration" have been words to conjure by. The mission to the Inland Sea has been from the first a happy example of the possibility of combining concentration and diffusion, of a work both intensive and extensive. But to adopt and pursue such a method as this meant that the *Fukuin Maru* mission workers must be willing to labour for years without the joy of seeing numbers of the people turning to Christ. "Ten years without visible results," said the Captain, but it was not the will of God that he should wait so long.

On December 2nd the anchor was dropped off Shozu, the first island to have the honour of a mission visit by the little vessel. It lies about thirty miles almost due west from the north point of Awaji, across the Harima Nada. It is the largest of all the Islands except Awaji itself, which the Captain did not include in his list, because Christian work was already being done there. The high land under whose black shadow the vessel came to anchor that first night out from Hiogo was part of the lofty mountain mass of Shozu Island, the view

from the summits of which, soaring three thousand feet into the sky, the Captain used to describe with enthusiasm.

The town off which the vessel made her first mission anchorage was doubtless Tonosho, the chief place on the island, destined to become the scene of some of the most marked successes of the Inland Sea Mission, and the first of the five chief centres of the work. It would appear that at Tonosho, and among the villages of Shozu generally, the Captain encountered very little hostility. He even speaks of the reception accorded him as cordial. The meetings were well attended, and here and there were individuals who seemed to take more than a passing interest in the vessel. The *mis*-givings which filled our Captain's heart when he came to anchor that dark December night under the darker shadow of Shozu were speedily changed to *thanks*givings.

The morning after their arrival the first visitor came aboard. "He was a policeman. He was so full of dignity that he lost his balance in the sampan (native boat) which brought him out, and tumbled overboard, sword, dignity and all." He is memorable as the first of many thousands who came as visitors to the ship as she went on her way.

Without seeking to trace the zigzag course of the vessel from island to island, or the zigzag tramps of her Captain from village to village over the rough granite hills, it is sufficient to record that during the first three months, the windy months of winter, with their heavy weather and penetrating cold, visits were made to thirteen islands, in the eastern section of the Inland Sea, and meetings held at

over fifty places. Many of these fifty towns and villages were within easy distance of the ship's anchorages, but others were on remote parts of the islands, and had to be reached by wearisome climbs over the hills. Delightful tramps these, to one who had the time and strength to spare: the trail winding over the pine-clad ridges, the air sweet with balsam of the woods and salt of the sea, every turn of the path yielding charming glimpses of the blue water, dotted with green islands and white sails of ships. The writer recalls such tramps in the Captain's company as among the pleasant incidents of his visits to the vessel. As for the Captain himself, overburdened with his other labours ashore and afloat, these long mountain walks made serious demands upon his strength, and it was a great relief to him when, in 1902, the kind gift of a 25-foot motor-launch by Mr. Allan, the donor of the ship, enabled him to dispense with most of this hill-climbing. The villages were of course not on top of the hills, but beyond the hills on distant shores of the islands, in places which did not afford suitable anchorage for the vessel.

If the mountain tramps involved much wearing toil, the navigation of the vessel was a still heavier task, for reasons already set down in the description of the Inland Sea. "Sweeping tides, hindering gales, danger from rock and shoal to ship and boats"—all these there were, and also, lack of lighthouses, lack of reliable charts, and above all, lack of auxiliary power in the vessel to take her to her desired haven when the wind failed or was contrary, and the tide swept her from her course. The Captain used to say, and the words reveal the heart

New *Fukuin Maru* in dock for equipment after launching

of the man, always eager for the hardest tasks, that he "*never prayed for a fair wind,*" for what was a fair wind for one ship might be a foul wind for another, sailing in a contrary direction; but simply for *wind,* for with a good breeze blowing one could beat and tack and get to the appointed place somehow.

"Whatever way the wind may blow
Some heart is glad to have it so.
So blow it east, or blow it west,
Whatever wind may blow is best."

It was a constant regret to the Captain, and to all interested in the work, during these first years, that the ship had been built to depend entirely upon her sails. In ordinary waters the loss would not have been so great, but in such a tangle of winds and tides as the Inland Sea presents, some auxiliary power was almost indispensable. For the lack of this equipment Captain Bickel was not responsible, for he recognized its desirability from the outset, and it was with reluctance and under protest that he yielded in the matter to the judgment of others and consented to delete the item of engines from the original plans approved by the generous donor of the vessel. But having so yielded he set himself to build the very best possible ship of sails, and with a cheerful courage laboured to obtain the largest results such a vessel could afford. If he groaned inwardly at times in the midst of a losing fight with wind and tide it was not for his own stress and strain but because of the loss to the work, which always lay next his heart. The motor-boat, however, not only relieved

him from most of the hard hill tramps, but was also of great service in shifting the vessel's anchorage, or in rescuing her when about to fall upon dangerous places, thus saving her skipper much anxiety as well as valuable time and strength. It was shortly before the writer's third summer visit to the Inland Sea that the launch was received, and he can testify that she lightened the Captain's toil and was a valuable addition to the vessel's equipment. Then, three years later, in 1905, the original plans for the ship were at length carried out, and she was fitted with auxiliary engines. This was made possible by a liberal contribution toward the expense from Mr. Allan's always open purse. It was a red letter day in the ship's log when she made her first run under her own power, flaunting wind and tide. But we are getting five years ahead of our story.

The Captain's general plan of campaign, already roughly drawn up when he started on his first mission cruise, has been already outlined. It may be of interest to learn what was the actual method of attack, or, let us say, approach, when any particular island or community was visited. "Where to begin, and what method to adopt, was indeed a problem. There seemed no way but to begin at the beginning, at the first island, the first village, and then the next; and from this has grown up by a simple and natural process, as God has led the way, rather than from any premeditated plan, the present widespread, organized effort." But how was the work in the first island, the first village, and then the next, to be begun?

On a clear cold January afternoon a white

schooner flying a foreign flag is seen by the villagers of, let us say, Shiraishi, working her way in toward their harbour. By the time she has come to anchor and the sails are being stowed, a crowd has gathered on the beach, curious to know what errand has brought the little stranger ship to their doors. Boats begin to push off. Presently a sampan propelled by two brawny scullers brings out a policeman in a rather ill-fitting uniform, sword on hip, to the foot of the ladder, where he is received by the Captain with every mark of respect. Coming on board he makes enquiry as to the purpose for which the ship comes, her crew, the Captain's family, and the like, her probable length of stay at her present anchorage, her last port of call and her next port of call. He asks to see the government permit under which the ship sails among the Islands, and is courteously conducted to the cabin where the precious document is submitted to his grave inspection. Having been already advised from Tokyo to afford the vessel and her company protection and necessary help, he expresses his satisfaction with the answers made to his enquiries, makes a conventional offer of aid if any occasion call for it, and over a cup of tea perhaps expresses his fear that the ignorant and backward condition of the people of the island will make the Captain's honourable efforts on their behalf nugatory. So soon as he has been bowed down the ladder, the ship's boat is lowered, and the Captain and Japanese evangelist are rowed to the shore. Merely pausing there long enough to announce to the crowd that a meeting will probably be held at some house in their village that evening, they make their way

to the village office, to pay a visit of courtesy, and perhaps make enquiry as to whose house may be suitable for the proposed evening meeting. For as a rule the meetings must be held in private houses, there being no halls or theatres to hire and no hotels to throw open their rooms for such a purpose. As on the mainland, meetings may be held in the open air, beside the beach, by the roadside, in a temple grove, or in a schoolhouse, but Captain Bickel preferred a gathering in the home of one of the villagers of good standing, in which common courtesy to the host would compel the audience to listen with quiet and respect, where the message could be spoken in an unhurried way, and where afterward those interested could be gathered about the *hibachi*—the Japanese hearth—for a more intimate talk. If the interest and friendship of the goodman of the house could be won, so that on future visits of the vessel his doors would be open, it was an asset of great value for time to come. A small *o rei*, or thank-gift, in money, wrapped according to etiquette in paper, and presented with some interesting tracts when the meeting had dispersed, served to cover the expense of light and fuel, with a little margin for the trouble incurred. To find a house spacious enough to accommodate a large part of the local population, and convenient of access, and then to persuade the head of the family to lend his rooms to the Jesus Teachers for a lecture-meeting was not always easy, was occasionally impossible. In such cases a meeting might be held by daylight in the open air, some tracts distributed, the work of the vessel explained, some simple truths of Christianity proclaimed, and notice given that

on her next round the vessel would call there again, and if possible an indoor meeting be arranged for.

A house having been secured, the next step was to advertise the meeting, which was done when possible by going in person from door to door, through the entire village, and announcing the time and place, with a polite invitation to the family to attend. The writer when with Captain Bickel took his share of these advertising calls, being accustomed to advertising his own meetings in this way in his own country work. One falls into a regular formula: "Please excuse me! Just a word! To-night at eight, at So-and-so's, there will be a lecture meeting by the *Fukuin Maru* people. Everybody welcome, children and all. Please arrange to come." When one has got off this formula at forty or fifty doors it comes as easy as sneezing. As a result of this advertising the house would be crowded, a large proportion of the villagers, men, women and children, attending.

The meeting would be without singing, Scripture reading or prayer, as these would be unintelligible to the audience, a waste of time, and a hindrance rather than a help. This being the first meeting held at this village its purpose is to introduce the Mission Vessel, remove prejudices against Christianity, create an interest in the Ship and a favourable attitude toward her work, and present certain elementary truths of the Gospel. A roll of maps, charts and pictures is hung up in the best lighted part of the room, among which is a map of the world showing the areas where the several chief religions prevail; a chart showing the number of

adherents of these religions, the number of languages into which the Christian Scriptures have been translated and the yearly output of Bibles, and facts of that nature; some pictures from Sunday-school rolls illustrating the truths presented, and a picture of the *Fukuin Maru.*

The audience is seated on the floor, on their shins, on the mats, as close together as they can sit with comfort. Those who smoke cluster around the *hibachi,* of which several have been brought in on account of the cold, and punctuate the address with the sharp rap of the little brass bowled pipes on the metal rim of the braziers. All listen seriously and respectfully, and apparently with understanding, the talk being made as simple as possible. When the address is finished, and the audience dismissed with an invitation to come out and visit the vessel, a number of the older people will remain for conversation, and it is nearing midnight when the picture roll is tied up, and the workers pick their way by lantern light back to the beach and signal for the boat to take them off to the ship.

In this way, during the first cruise, as mentioned above, thirteen of the most easterly group of islands, carrying fifty villages, were opened up to the work. In a very few of these villages Christian meetings had been held, once at least, by visiting evangelists from the mainland. One Christian was met, another was heard of. Practically, to all the villages and to all the people, the Gospel was a strange, new message.

The reception accorded to the *Fukuin Maru* and her Captain in this group of islands was almost everywhere, as on Shozu, more encouraging than he

had dared to hope; the Ship, the Captain, and the Message had at least a favourable introduction to the Island people. The attendance at the meetings ran up into an average of several hundred to a village. It was curiosity of course, and a wish for entertainment, that brought them together, not a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; but it did very well for a beginning, and each one carried away some novel ideas to brood over till the next visit of the ship.

The experiences of these first three months, in these first fifty villages visited, were duplicated in the hundreds of other villages to which the ship went during the remainder of her first year of service, her first round of the Inland Sea. Occasionally a village or an island presented a front of deliberate and stubborn hostility, as at Setoda, on Ikuchi, where every householder in the town signed a pledge binding himself not to lend his house for a Christian meeting. By the way, watch Setoda, the unwilling, and note the entries in the Captain's log in which she figures. Tonosho, the hospitable, was the chief town of the great Island of Shozu, and so the natural capital of the easternmost group of islands. To be received there in a friendly way was a happy omen. Setoda, the inhospitable, was the most important place on the large Island of Ikuchi, and the natural capital of the island cluster next westward. To be repelled here must have been a great disappointment. As a rule, however, the Captain found open doors, or at least doors not barred and bolted, and as for the few that seemed nailed up to stay he referred them to Him who can break the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in

sunder—and knocked again on the next round of the Islands.

While the vessel was making her first rounds of the Islands her home port was at Banshu, at the head of a deep narrow fiord, a lovely bit of water extending far into the hills on the north side of the Harima Nada. Banshu is within easy reach of Himeji, where Captain Bickel made his shore home, in those brief periods when he granted himself shore leave, and where he left his family when the season made it unsafe for them to accompany him among the Islands.

If one should cruise the coasts of the Seven Seas he could hardly find an anchorage more ideal than that at Banshu. No matter what tempest is abroad it rouses no tumult in these hill-sheltered waters, across the width of which a Japanese archer would deem it a poor feat to shoot an arrow. And surely never did the little fiord wear a more charming aspect than one smiling May morning in 1900, when the Little White Ship, returned from a cruise among the islands of the Ikuchi Cluster, lay there swinging at her anchor. The writer had arrived from Yokohama, via Himeji, the evening before, and this was his first visit to the ship, and the first day of his visit. The narrow bay, all silver and blue in the morning breeze and sunshine, the tree-clad hills in which it was framed, the dainty little vessel at anchor in mid-stream, made a picture to rejoice an artist or a poet. Some matters of mission business detained the ship here for several days, and as we were outside the limits of the Captain's parish and therefore holding no evangelistic services, it afforded a delightful opportunity for

rest and recreation. The Captain, of course, was busy with many things, preparing for the next cruise, but Mrs. Bickel and a lady guest from Yokohama, with the Japanese evangelist and the writer, improved the shining hours by visits to the lower slopes of the hills to gather the wild azaleas, or by excursions on one of the ship's boats down to "The Rocks," where we found wonderful shell-fish, sea-slugs and other marine curiosities. With the going down of the sun, and the hush of the evening calm, rose the full moon in glory behind the ancient wide-boughed pines.

Now, every Japanese is a potential poet, and at the writer's suggestion Evangelist Katataye, gazing at the golden splendour foiled by the dark boughs through which it glowed, presently produced a poem of the conventional Japanese form and flavour, wherein within the compass of thirty syllables may be found the pines and the moonlight, the hush of evening and the sigh of the sleeping tide, and a hint of the strange sadness which the sight of such great beauty wakes in the human heart.

After one or two such Arcadian days we got up sail and anchor and slipped down the placid fiord to the open waters of the Harima Nada. Here there was a fine fresh breeze blowing, and presently we were bowling along at a seven knot clip down the west. Not far removed from the outlet of the fiord were two tiny twin islands, each with a village on its shore, which it had not been convenient for the vessel to call at on her former cruises. Accordingly we shaped our course for these, and presently coming to anchor off one of them lowered

the boat and went ashore. The people came running together to the beach, and when a considerable crowd had gathered, the roll of maps and pictures was hung up against a convenient post, and Evangelist Katataye explained to them the purpose of the vessel, and they heard for the first time of the living and true God, and of Jesus Christ whom He had sent. No attempt was made here to arrange for an evening meeting, perhaps because there was no safe anchorage near. And as the other twin island lay very near its fellow, and both isles had contributed to our audience, and the day was already far spent, we made no other landing, but got up sail and set the course for one of the larger islands westward.

During the weeks that followed we voyaged many leagues, landed on many islands, visited many villages, clambered over many granite hills, held many meetings in hospitable farmhouses, or on windy beaches, the full account of which would leave no room for aught else between the covers of this book. Those were memorable days, memorable for the beauty of the Island world amid which we sailed, or drifted, by sunlight or moonlight; memorable for the afternoon tramps across the hills, with the song of the south wind through the pines for marching music, and for the glorious moonlight nights when the sea lay in purple shadow and the silence was broken but by the whisper of the waves along the flanks of the vessel. Memorable beyond that were they for the daily glimpses afforded of our Captain's heart, of his supreme devotion to his Master and to the Mission on which the Master had sent him, and of the tact, the wis-

dom, the courtesy, the patience, the gentleness with which he was introducing that Master and that Mission to the Island Folk. Memorable, too, were those golden weeks, because they were the Beginning of the Year of our Lord to many a gray village on the Island shores.

In the above account of the vessel's first year of service those trials of the Captain's faith which arose from the perversity of man have been lightly touched upon. There were rebuffs as well as welcomes. It was not only in the Island of Ikuchi that he found unfriendly faces. True, not many places were so openly hostile as Setoda, but in not a few the people met the Captain's overtures with suspicion and half-concealed enmity. In his reports he makes very light of unpleasant experiences, rarely referring to them at all, as becometh a missionary and a sailor. Sometimes, though, in conversation, spinning a seaman's yarn as he paced the deck with a visiting friend, he might introduce them as amusing episodes, too good to be forgotten.

To see children fleeing in terror, because they had been told the tall fierce looking foreign priest would drink their blood; to be greeted by those same children, grown bolder, with such heartsome epithets as "foreign fool," "child-thief," "robber," and "Christian pig," names which they had heard at home from their elders' lips; to be shunned as a Russian spy, an enemy of Great Japan, a despiser of the Imperial House, an introducer of new customs which it was not lawful for the Islanders to observe, being Japanese, a defamer of the ancestral gods, a member of the sect everywhere spoken against, one of those who turn the world upside

down—most of these are experiences which any missionary in country work on the mainland can duplicate, but no doubt the Islands afforded more than the average number and variety of them. In some places the people sullenly refused to direct him on his way, as he went from village to village, a discourtesy which the writer has never himself witnessed in Japan. In extreme cases they went so far as to threaten his life if he should repeat his visit to their community. In some instances at least the priests were back of this hostility, foreseeing in the success of the vessel the downfall of their own authority. Occasionally they came out openly against the Christian teachers, denouncing them publicly as dangerous misleaders of the people.

But open, frank hostility to the new Teaching was comparatively rare and was the least of the obstacles in the Captain's way. The real fight was with the silent suspicion, the deep-rooted prejudices, the love of the old heathen customs; with long standing habits of thought, and with human ignorance and depravity and inertia. How the open enmity was disarmed, and these covert enemies overcome, must be told in another chapter.

When the *Fukuin Maru* came to anchor at Banshu in the summer of 1900, with half a year's voyaging behind her, she had sailed the broad spaces and the narrow channels of the *Seto-Nai-Kai* from Awaji to western reaches of the Bingo Nada, and had aroused at least a friendly curiosity in the hearts of thousands of the Island people. The Captain had explored the eastern half of his parish. The conquest of the Islands was begun.

He had gone out with misgivings, he returned with thanksgivings. A great and effectual door had been opened to him. If there were many adversaries there were also many who were ready to be friends. "We have been getting acquainted," he said later, summing up the experiences of the year. These first mission cruises were voyages of discovery not for the Captain only, but for the Islanders as well. Their discoveries were such that they awaited with interest the next coming of the little vessel, the next address on the strange religion she represented. To the Island Folk of the Inland Sea had come the first faint dawn of a new day.

X

THE CAMEL'S NOSE

THE Captain's success, during his Voyage of Discovery, in introducing his Vessel and his Message to the Island communities on the shores of the Harima Nada and the Bingo Nada put the future of the Inland Sea Mission in a much more hopeful light, humanly speaking, than that in which it had presented itself to his mind that memorable night when the little vessel lay in the dark shadows of Shozu Shima, with the whole vast field all unknown, untried. With fresh hope and courage, which increased with each fresh adventure of faith, he hoisted sail for his next cruise among the Islands.

Passing by hospitable Shozu Shima, with its verdant satellites, and surly Ikuchi, with its adjacent isles, the Little White Ship spread her white wings for the two great groups of islands yet unvisited, lying far down toward the sunset, those which we now speak of as the Kurahashi and Agenosho Groups. From island to island, and from harbour to harbour, the little vessel moved on, picking her way carefully among rocks and shoals, charted and uncharted; and from village to village across the pine-clad granite hills tramped the Captain and the Japanese evangelist, with lantern and

picture rolls; till presently, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, most of the principal islands had been visited, and most of the more important of their towns and villages had had a glimpse of the trim little foreign ship, had seen the tall foreign captain walk their stony streets, and had had for the first time an opportunity to hear of that strange foreign religion to make known which, it seemed, had brought ship and captain to their shores. Setting down these islands and island communities of the Kurahashi and Agenosho Groups on the ship's list, beneath those visited during the earlier cruises in the clusters of Ikuchi and Shozu, the Captain found that he had carried his message to some sixty islands, and to about four hundred Island communities, before the vessel had completed her first full year of service, before the second Christmas Day lit up the Island hills. As in the case of the more easterly groups, the villages and towns of these westward islands, with very few exceptions, accorded a polite if not a cordial reception to the tall white stranger. Houses were opened for the meetings and the people packed them to the walls, and out past the movable walls into the street or the courtyard. The Captain and his Japanese fellow-worker, who was of course the chief speaker, were heard with at least outward respect and attention, if perhaps with inward incredulity and amusement. At the least a nexus had been established between the vessel and the Islands; a footing had been gained of which advantage could be taken on subsequent visits; the camel had gotten his nose into the tent. It was the Captain's steadfast resolution that the hold gained

should never be relaxed; that no door once ever so little set ajar should be allowed to close again; that once the camel's nose was inside the curtain it should never be withdrawn. So the Captain came sailing back to Banshu with the west wind swelling his canvas, more enriched by his year's voyages than ever was skipper coming home from a season's sealing with a hold packed with green hides or from some prosperous trading venture to the coasts of Cathay, for had he not sixty islands and four hundred Island communities on his list of open doors? On his way back he had even made opportunity to touch at a few of the places visited during his first cruises, and great was his joy and gratitude to find a welcome more cordial even than that previously accorded him.

In a letter written to *Gleanings* in the fall of 1900, the Captain writes:

"Since I wrote my last letter to you in February, the *Fukuin Maru* has had a variety of experiences. God's loving kindness has, however, watched over us day and night. We have had the joy since last December of seeing Christmas Day dawn upon fifty islands large and small, in that, for the first time, the 'glad tidings of great joy' has come to the ears and I trust, in some cases, in some measure, to the hearts of the people. We have had a happy, busy time these last months.

"Well, despite high winds, low winds, and no winds, and in spite of the necessity of playing a continual game of hide and seek with the tide between rocks and shoals, we have been permitted to visit some seventy anchorages, and have had meetings at which, at a low estimate, we had an attendance of thirty thousand persons. In all but two islands we had a repetition of the experiences

reported before, abundant willingness to hear and much kindness shown us by the people. In one island thirteen meetings were held, in the largest houses available, in different villages, during a period of only eight days, and we changed our anchorage four times in doing it. At one place we had a hard tramp on a dark night over hills of 1,200 feet, and losing our way we were late in arriving, only to find that a veritable feast of food and fruit, lemonade, beer and *sakè* had been prepared for us in the best house in the village. After partaking of the more innocent portion of the food we were ushered into a large new school building, packed with people, into which little air could come as the twenty windows and the doors were packed as well. On the way back we got caught by the tide under a cliff, and seeing the prospect of a long wait and a poor chance even then, I took the whole mission outfit on my shoulders—Katataye San (the evangelist), lamp, umbrellas, picture roll and *furoshiki* (cloth for carrying a parcel in)—and waded waist deep around the cliff for a quarter of a mile, reaching the vessel at 1 A. M. after another four miles in wet clothes.

"In this particular island, as also in some others, the [missionary] sisters who have been with us this summer rendered valuable assistance. Special meetings for women were arranged for, and were much appreciated. At one place in Saki Jima, when the ladies were present, the floor of half the house collapsed, bringing down the dispensary (for the proprietor was a doctor) and all the people into a hole about five feet deep. No one was hurt, however.

"Well, then, you may ask, what about the two islands where we had a different reception? Well, the devil holds heyday there. They are two of the chief Buddhist strongholds in the Inland Sea and, strange to say, two of the most immoral places in the same area. At Mitarai, one of these islands, the priests and people had

a consultation before we came and decided that no one must let us have a house and any one attending a meeting should be driven out. We came, and the people were very hard indeed. We expressed our regret at such a state of affairs, and told them that if we could not have a house we must hold meetings in the open air. We prayed long and hard, and then held some open air meetings and sought to get in touch with individuals, with the result that little by little the people seemed to soften. The last evening we spent up in one of the temples with the priests, assuring them that we had come to come again and yet again. So after I get through with my outfitting and cleaning I hope to go back, and hope and expect to find the people more friendly.

"On my way up to Banshu I called in at my first island, Shozu Shima, again. God had so put my want of faith to shame that I dared not insult Him any further by doubting that He was leading us step by step in these first visits to island after island; but coming back to the first island for the second time, after the novelty of the thing had worn off, even in the face of 'so great a cloud of witnesses' my faith wavered, only to be put to shame again. Our reception was as cordial as before, the meetings as well attended, the interest of individuals as great as before.

"And so all the way God has been overwhelming us with mercy. And now there are coming in requests for literature and for letters or renewed visits, or visits to places not yet reached. From one place visited last January comes a request: 'Can you send some one or come yourself again, as there are twenty families wishing special instruction?'

"And you, my dear friends, have had a large share in bringing these blessings upon us. You have, I feel sure, prayed earnestly with us, and God in His abundant mercy has heard us and has answered far beyond our

faith. He has brought glory to His name by again proving that through weak instruments He is able to accomplish His purposes. As you have had a share in bringing the blessings, I am anxious that you should also share the blessing. Hence I write so earnestly of His loving kindness, that rejoicing with me you may be encouraged."

So it came to pass that when Christmas Day dawned in the year of grace nineteen hundred, in sixty of the chief islands of the Inland Sea, in some four hundred of their most important towns and villages, the camel's nose was already within the tent door. Captain Bickel was determined that, God helping him, it should never be forced to withdraw, but that head and shoulders should follow in due time. Referring to the difficulties confronting him, and the signs of progress that even the earliest years of the work brought, he says, "But the promises of the Lord, who knows it all, yes, all, do they not assure us that the wedge just entering shall be driven in up to the very hilt, and to the rending asunder of the dark, solid mass, if we are but faithful, ever faithful." How the Captain's determination and the divine promises were fulfilled may be found duly set forth in subsequent chapters.

XI

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CREW

AMONG the many difficult problems which faced the skipper of the *Fukuin Maru* at the opening of the Inland Sea Mission none was of more immediate practical moment than that of a crew for his little vessel. There had to *be* a crew, for no navigator, however expert and resourceful, could hope to sail even a little eighty-ton fore-and-aft schooner single handed. To handle her properly, in such waters as she was to traverse, there were needed seven able-bodied men. It was out of the question, for financial and other reasons, to engage a foreign crew. Japan being a group of islands, a land of fishing fleets, and possessing a large mercantile marine, has no lack of bold and skillful seamen. If only there had been among these seven Christian sailors who would have taken an interest in the little ship for her work's sake, and have shipped on her for the love of God! To run a Mission Ship with a heathen crew is like running a Christian school with heathen teachers. There being no Christian sailors available Captain Bickel raked together such a crew as he could, and hoisted sail. He was used to sailors, and to rough and godless sailors. He would get along somehow. It was to do hard things he had come to

New *Fukuin Maru* at anchor

Japan. That they were guiltless of a knowledge of the King's English, or even of "English as she is Japped," while he himself had hardly what could be called a speaking acquaintance with Japanese, was a minor difficulty and ready to vanish away. A major difficulty was to preserve discipline on the ship without resorting to the disciplinary measures which those who go down to the sea in ships have found necessary from ancient times.

Corporal punishment is viewed with disapproval in Japan. In the seclusion of his own home the goodman of the house may, indeed, lay violent hands upon his wife and children, in chastisement for real or fancied faults, or as a pleasurable exercise. It is for them to cherish a lively gratitude toward their lord and master for his honourable attentions. A policeman or a prison warden may do bodily damage to those who have been imprudent enough to fall into his hands, to encourage them to a confession of their wrong-doing, or to impress them with the majesty of the law. But in the schools no teacher is permitted to inflict bodily punishment. No cats-of-nine-tails infest a Japanese class-room, and even a box on the ear would render liable to arrest for assault and battery. The writer is not sure that the officers on board a Japanese merchant ship never lay a chastening hand or a rope's end upon fractious members of their crew; but such a proceeding would be irregular and accompanied with considerable risk. At all events, no foreign captain in his normal senses would think of employing the rough and ready ship's discipline of the British mercantile marine, as described in popular tales of the sea,

upon a Japanese crew, and most undreamable would this be in the case of a Missionary Captain.

To preserve strict discipline by an appeal to the reason, conscience and sense of honour of even a good crew is no easy task. The makeshift crew which manned the *Fukuin Maru* on her maiden voyage proved unreliable and unsatisfactory enough, and added much to the trouble and heart-ache of the Captain during the difficult early years of the Mission. Their conduct on shore, also, when the ship lay at anchor for Gospel work, brought a bad name on the vessel, and tended to render nugatory the Captain's labour. Down in his sailor heart, accustomed to the stern and effective treatment of turbulent mariners on the western main, he must often have sighed, "Oh, that I might lay my hand to a good old-fashioned marlinspike, that I might teach these sons of Belial not to transgress!" On one occasion matters got so bad that the whole crew had to be dismissed.

But there were mellowing influences at work upon the hearts of these rough, hardened, unpromising sailor lads. The mingled firmness and kindness of the foreign skipper; the Christian home life which the little vessel housed, with the gentle goodness of the Lady of the Cabin, and the play and prattle of the children; the daily morning worship, some half understood words of the new Teaching, the evident earnestness and sincerity of the missionary, something about the work or the workers began to soften their hearts. One after another they began to listen, to enquire, to show signs of a changed life. To narrate how, from being the disgrace of the ship, and the despair of

her Captain, they became her glory and his comfort and joy, is the purpose of this chapter, and this can best be done by borrowing from the Captain's log.

The first of the Seven Sailors to show signs of a change of heart was a lad from Sanuki Province, on the Island of Shikoku, by name

Kida Etaro.

Old Glory is half-mast high in the westerly gale to-day. "The wind will fray the fly of that flag off!" says the boatswain. "Let it fray, Bo'sn," said we, "for it suits our mood!" This on a day last winter.

The Mission Ship had started bright and early that day. Wind there was none, and none was expected. We crept along through the narrow channels, partly sailing, partly towing the vessel with our launch, when suddenly down came a snow-squall off the high hills, and then a lull, then another squall, with the weight of which we shot out into the open, picking up the launch as we passed and then towing her in turn. Squall followed squall. Reef after reef was taken. The hills and rocks were wiped out of sight by the snow as it drove and swirled. An hour more and we were in sore plight, sea steadily rising, wind steadily increasing. The launch towing astern was every moment more seriously endangered. To hoist her on board is impossible. We watch anxiously the sailor lad who sits in her, steering, and try to encourage him and ourselves by an occasional word of good cheer. Five minutes more and we shall be under shelter! We shout and point to the dimly seen line of hills under which we hope to round up in safety. Just then with the onrush of a heavy "fourth sea" the launch gives an ominous yaw, and snap goes one of the stout tow-ropes. If the other rope snaps the launch and man both are lost. We know that,

so does he. He with all a sailor's pluck goes to refasten the broken tow-rope, when with a sudden heave he is thrown bodily overboard. Rocks on either side make "bringing the ship to" all but impossible. The attempt is made despite the danger, and a boat gets away with much difficulty. For three long, weary hours in the heavy sea we search for our shipmate, but to no purpose. Stiff with cold, drenched with spray and driving sleet, it was a sorry company that knelt around the skylight in the falling snow, with bared heads, to commit their comrade to God. There were no dry eyes there, not even those of the case-hardened skipper. Then after a brief struggle with wind and wave our vessel was brought into safety, and a three days' search for the body of our friend began, only to end in failure. It is a long story, that of the search, and the breaking of the news to the widowed wife and old father by one of the men, who, in true sailor fashion, went bravely to his task, then broke down like a child and from that very fact did it all the better. Enough of this!

The man? Who was he? A lad named Kida Etaro from Sanuki Province, on the main south island. He joined the ship at the beginning, and with the rest led an evil life; gambled, drank, squandered, thieved, lied and what not! The Mission Ship was in bad grace, or rather *dis*grace. The missionary skipper had a sore heart. Some sneered, some blamed, some few understood and pitied, while the men, with oriental assurance, thinking he knew nothing of their evil ways, took him for an easy dupe. The skipper prayed, and waited, and prayed again.

A change came. Kida Etaro changed. Others seemed to change too, but this man certainly *did*. He first, then the others, asked for baptism. We felt the need of caution, and put them off, but finally consented that he, at least, should be baptized; yet now—it was too late, he had gone, gone home, yes, home! His example was to,

have helped the others, so planned the skipper; and now—he was gone! The skipper's heart was sore. So when Old Glory, half-mast high, frayed in the gale that day, what wonder he replied, "Let it fray, Bo'sn, for it suits our mood."

The Sequel:—Some four months have passed. The Mission Ship is snug in a wee, land-locked harbour on a sunny, laughing day. The men have, of their own accord, "dressed ship," *i. e.*, put flags from the mastheads to the deck. Friends come down and all hearts are glad. The launch is filled with visiting friends and towing a boatful astern glides down the narrow bay to a quiet spot. A hymn of praise is sung, a prayer ascends. A moment's solemn hush, in which we feel that God is near, and then—"In the name of the Father, the Son ——" comes the voice of the officiating missionary on the still air, and the first converts from the Mission Ship are buried in the baptismal waters of the very sea on which they lived their evil lives. The first? No, not so, for their shipmate, Kida Etaro, entered into life through the same waters of the beautiful Inland Sea of Japan and led the way. We returned quietly to the ship, and there, after a word of praise and thanksgiving, a memorial brass plate was affixed to the mainmast:

Kida Etaro, Seaman, Died Believing in God.
While Serving His Country in the Cause of Christ
He was Lost at Sea.
He That Believeth in Me, Though
He Were Dead, Yet Shall He Live.

Thus reads the legend. And so ended a happy day.

This happy day, which witnessed the first baptismal service in the Inland Sea, was April 18, 1903, the day before the Captain sailed from Kobe on his first brief furlough. That he had been permitted to see the first-fruits of the Islands unto

Christ, so long before results of his work were to be expected, and that these first believers were members of his own crew, men who had seemed hopelessly depraved and hardened, must have been a great joy to the Captain's heart, a promise and prophecy of great triumphs of the Gospel among the Island people in the years to come. "They were the first tokens of the ingathering that in God's time must come, reminding us in their early appearing of some chance fruit tree, that stands alone in blossom among its fellows in early spring."

One of the sailors whose hearts were touched by Kida's death, and who became the first-fruits of the Inland Sea Mission, was the boatswain, Hirata. The story of his conversion and subsequent Christian life is a most interesting chapter in the Transforming of the Crew. Of all the seven he seemed the most abandoned, the most hopeless, and of them all he became the most conspicuous example of the saving power of the Gospel. The history of the Inland Sea Mission would be incomplete without the narrative of the Awakening of Hirata, a true tale of the sea, and one which illustrates both the utter sincerity of the Inland Sea work, and the transforming power of the grace of God. Hirata, "a short, ugly faced little fellow, built in a lump," clambered up over the stern of the vessel one snapping cold winter day, looking for a job. But let us hear from the skipper's own lips.

The Boatswain's Story.

"He came in through the hawsepipe," is a suggestive nautical phrase. My friend Hirata San did not; he came in over the stern, literally. The day was cold, a

good winter snap was on. That fact presupposed clothes! All he had to support the dignity of his allegiance to the Mikado was half a shirt and a loin cloth, things acquired, and a shock of hair thrown in by nature. He turned his toes in and made obeisance most eloquently. His bow fairly spoke. It said, "I'll do you the first chance I get and I won't be long in getting one." His crafty eyes looked straight in the direction of the eight cardinal points of the compass all at once. He claimed consideration on the ground that he had a brother on the ship. That only made things worse. The brother was bad enough in all conscience. No, we did not want him. But he kept his eight-point eye on us, and the next time we needed a man he was there waiting.

Well, he had one virtue at least, he was openly, cheerfully evil. He and the devil went watch and watch. He gambled, stole and lied by preference. He drank heavily and loved to fight, for was he not a *jiujitsu* expert of seven years' training? All this he did and worse.

Man has a soul, they say. We tried to find his, tried for two years, but never got a glimpse. He came to the ship's daily worship with the rest, bowed his head like a saint and looked out of his eight-point eyes at the rest of the crew all at once with a wink to which they responded. When it was all over they went away forward and laughed at the fun. Being of sailor build, we had seen a craft or two since we first sailed deep water, but for straight evil-doing the Mission Ship outsailed them all. Morally, spiritually, it was bedlam with the lid off, and our friend was the man who held the lid. Used to a hard road though we were, our heart was sore at the condition of things. What had we come for but to change such men as these? and yet change there was none. Long and deep were the searchings of heart. Did we so utterly fail to represent the Master that

these men were not held in check, by shame at least, if not by conviction?

This lasted two years, and then something happened. One of the men fell overboard in a winter gale and was drowned. God used this to move our friend's heart. He began to inquire, but how? Must he learn English? No. Would he not have to go to school and study before he could find any help from Christianity? So little impression had the two years on the ship made! Ignorant to the extent of not being able to read or write the simple Japanese *Kana*, or syllable alphabet, morally crooked in all his ways, was there any hope of his being changed? In deep disappointment, almost with disgust, we answered his inquiries. We did not believe him sincere then nor did we later on when he professed faith in Christ.

We refused baptism, but there was a change, even we could not deny it; yes, a change at last, slight indeed, but growing in force continually until the old man became completely new. No mere figure of speech or saintly cant is this, but hard solid fact. He was changed from the gambling, lying, thieving, quarrelsome, ignorant tool of the Evil One to a true child of God. No miracles these days, say some! No, not if this is not one. The quarrelsome man became the peacemaker, and the man of evil life an example to all. So far so good!

"Captain," said an Islander one day, "I enjoyed the talk immensely last night."

"Whose talk?"

"Why, Hirata San, as you know, has been preaching every night for a week in this village." As a matter of fact we did not know. That was the beginning but by no means the end. In the measure of his previous degradation was his conviction of sin. In the measure of this conviction were his appreciation of God's wondrous mercy and his longing to render service of love.

We tried to teach him but failed. He was outside our methods somehow. But he pored over the old Book of books in every spare moment, and so we left him to God's spirit. The harsh hands became gentle in service for others. The pride of other days became loving humility that would not be refused. The shrewdness of evil times turned to a remarkable thoughtfulness and resourcefulness in finding ways of service. Added to all he developed a remarkable ability to hold a mixed audience with his powerful presentation of God's love and mercy.

Long had we desired some systematic plan for colportage work in the Islands. A word spoken in jest gave the needed clue. We were lowering a boat together. "How did you fare with your meeting last night?" we asked.

"Oh, very well indeed," said he. "We shall have to get you a little mission ship," said we in jest, "if you keep on like this."

"Yes," said he, in jest also, pointing to a little Japanese sailing craft, "one like that."

That night we did some thinking and praying. The result, together with the generosity of some friends, was that a little vessel was built and Hirata San was placed in charge of her to carry on colportage work in the many islands we visit.

When the little ship was launched we stood on the beach and watched him as he worked up to his waist in water. The tears were streaming down his face as he worked. He was overwhelmed with the thought of God's mercy in bringing him up out of the depths. A foreman shipwright stood by who had known him of old, and said, "Let him alone, he has a vile temper. He is so mad that the tears are running down his face, because the vessel is stuck a bit on the chocks. He is dangerous at such times."

Three years later that same foreman was baptized,

having been led to Christ by our friend. After a most astonishing profession of faith made before the believers assembled on the *Fukuin Maru's* deck, he suddenly turned to us and said, "And, Captain, I now know what those tears meant."

Hirata San, the gentle, humble, ever-faithful servant of God and his fellow-men, still lives and serves. May God grant him many days!

In another place, in describing the activities of the Colportage Vessel, *Fukuin Maru No. 2,* Captain Bickel speaks thus of his former boatswain:

"The colporter-evangelist who is at the same time sailing master is a joy to our heart. He himself is a living product of Bible influence. He came to me as one who was, humanly speaking, hopeless. Ignorant and evil in all his ways, all that we might do seemed without effect. When at last a desire for knowledge came to him, his absolute ignorance and lack of mental training seemed to be a hopeless bar to his understanding, and yet we saw a marvellous change and rapid growth. The secret lay in the one fact, as we afterward found, that he used every spare moment to pore over his Bible, and at times half the night long would spell out the words and pray and think until the tears ran down his face. Not the least of the strange changes in him is the fact that he can hold a mixed audience for an hour or two with his strong presentation of God's power to change men's lives."

The efforts of the Captain and of the evangelists to explain the Christian doctrines to this eager seeker after truth were futile. "We tried to teach him, but failed. He was outside our methods,

Bo's'n Hirata and group he is teaching

somehow. And so we left him to God." And God Himself spoke to him through His word, as he prayed and wept above it. But first God had spoken to him through the Captain himself.

In many entries in the Captain's log we meet Bo's'n Hirata, and always as a humble and faithful Christian, and an earnest worker. It is he who with gentleness, tenderness, tact, wisdom and fine feeling ministered to the dead and the living at the funeral of Nagai Minoru. Three years after his baptism we find him so zealous and successful in evangelistic efforts that a whole group of villages is entrusted to him, that he may teach them the Gospel. As he preaches to a crowd one night, Captain Kobayashi stands with Captain Bickel in a dark corner, listening in wonder at the eloquence of this unlettered sailor, and says, "Captain, I don't understand it, but that is what you people call the power of God. I wish you would let him come and speak to my students." It was this twice-born Hirata, "this half-sized sinner with a big sense of shame and a big appreciation of God's mercy," this saint of the forecastle, who at the deck-house door at three bells of the middle watch, when the Captain had just returned from one of his nightly tramps across the hills, said in reply to the request that he convey a Bible to a certain man in the morning, "He is not ready yet for this Bible, but he has another. You are his Bible. He is watching you. As you fail Christ fails; as you live Christ so Christ is revealed to him."

Emphatically was our Missionary-Skipper the incarnate Gospel, the visible Christ, to the men of his own crew, and because he lived before them

the Christ he preached, those hardened and dissolute sailors, seemingly the most hopeless of all whose salvation the Captain sought, became the first-fruits of the Inland Sea Mission. Henceforth we find them brethren beloved and helpers in the Gospel, and none more beloved and helpful than Captain Hirata, of the *Fukuin Maru, No. 2,* sailing his little Japanese craft among the Islands—preacher, colporter, and Christian mariner.

In the Log of the *Fukuin Maru* are many tales like that of the Awakening of Hirata, and still others in The Log That is Kept on High, of the power of the old Gospel as shown in the work on the Inland Sea. The Gospel narrative may have but a small nucleus of fact, as some professed Seekers after Truth would fain, with a great show of learning, persuade us to believe; but while the true story of Bo's'n Hirata can be duplicated every day on every mission field there will be a great many of us unreasonable and simple-minded enough to take our chances on it. Seriously, these Twice-Born Men are the fulfillment of our Lord's promise to His disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do," and are, in every age and every land where the Gospel is preached, the incontrovertible proof of its divine origin. If every miracle recorded by the four Evangelists could be proved to be imaginary, there are enough miracles of a high spiritual order wrought every year in Japan, China, India or Africa to afford vivid and conclusive proof of Christ's Saviourhood, and of His continued presence with His people.

XII

SHEPHERDS OF THE ISLES

IT is a missionary truism that the evangelization and Christianization of any race must be, in the main, the task of men of that race. Jewish missionaries brought the Gospel into Europe, but it was not the Jews who converted the Greeks, nor the Greeks the Latins, nor the Latins the Celts and Saxons. The conversion to Christianity of the East is not the task of the West, but of the men of the East who have become the first-fruits of the Gospel in India, China and Japan. So soon as the Christian propaganda in any country has gained some momentum, when a few converts have been gathered, some little churches organized, Christian schools established, and there begin to appear among the native Christians those who have received gifts from the great Head of the Church, fitting them to become the spiritual leaders of their own people, the wise missionary will transfer to them, as rapidly as possible, the responsibility of the work. He must decrease, and they must increase. And their increase will be his deepest joy, for it is the proof of the success of his own mission.

None knew better than Captain Bickel that it

was by the lips and lives of Japanese Christians the Islanders of the Inner and Outer Seas must be evangelized and transformed. Indeed the great bulk of the work must be done, he realized, not merely by Japanese, but by Island Japanese, each new convert to Christianity becoming in his measure a missionary to his own island, his own village. For this reason it was part of his plan of work to associate with himself only a few supported helpers, evangelists who, at first at least, must come to him from mission stations on the mainland, and through them to bring every possible influence to bear upon the Islanders who accepted the Gospel to lead them to personal active service for Christ. One supported evangelist for each of the five or six districts into which he had divided his parish, and, if it might be, one assistant evangelist in each, was the maximum number of helpers, or associate evangelists, which he allowed himself to desire. Of these, the assistants, the second man for each of the districts, remained an ideal, a hope, the mission funds available not being sufficient to provide them a living. Five men, then, under the Great Shepherd of the sheep, who has compassion on the multitudes when He sees them unshepherded, must be the spiritual leaders and feeders of the Island Folk, each one seeking with the aid the vessel can afford, and with the aid which only the Divine Spirit can afford, to give a knowledge of the Gospel to an average population of some 350,000. No one can say the Inland Sea Mission is overmanned!

At the outset, when the *Fukuin Maru* made her first mission cruise, there was but a single Japanese evangelist with Captain Bickel. He had a cabin

on the vessel, and was a sort of chaplain, conducting the daily worship of the ship's company, and explaining the teachings of Christianity to the frequent visitors. When a village was visited he was, like Paul at Lystra, the chief speaker, and the Captain his assistant. By and by, in the most easterly group of islands, among which the vessel had made her first round of visits, the work had gained sufficient footing to make it feasible to place there a permanent evangelist. A town adapted to become a centre of work for the whole district was chosen, and an evangelist placed in residence there, to devote his whole strength to this group of islands, carrying perhaps 300,000 people. By and by another centre was established in the next westerly group of islands, with another evangelist in charge; till presently the whole Inland Sea had been divided into four districts, each with its resident evangelist. Last of all was added the Southwestern Division, of the island groups of the deep sea. Thus were inducted into their bishoprics the Five Baptist Bishops of the Inland Sea Mission, the Shepherds of the Isles, each one responsible for all the work carried on in his district; each one responsible, to the limit of his ability, for the evangelization of several hundreds of thousands of souls.

Henceforth the Gospel light was shining not from the Little White Ship only, threading the Island channels and casting a transient beam on one village and another, but from five centres, in a constant and steady glow. From group to group goes the vessel, bringing comfort and encouragement and inspiration to the evangelists, and to the

little companies of believers who have been gathered. When the ship comes to Setoda, for example, the centre for the second group westward, Pastor Ito, who is in residence there, is taken on board, and the ship makes a round of all the villages within his circuit, the fifteen or twenty places where he has been holding regular meetings, and others which were beyond his reach. Pastor Ito is brought back to his home in Setoda, some special meetings are perhaps held there, as it is an important town, and then the prow is turned to the next group, where a like program is followed. Thus each of our Five Shepherds, while enjoying a position of trust and honour, and stimulated to earnest effort by the sense of responsibility, feels that he is part of a larger work, and at each visit of the ship receives new comfort and encouragement and inspiration for his arduous toil. Captain Bickel was a true Over-Shepherd to all of them. He carried them all in his heart, and they found in him unfailing sympathy and help.

In those trying first years of the Inland Sea work our Captain had some heart-breaking experiences with his evangelistic helpers, as well as with his crew. The trained and tried men whom he needed were too useful where they were to be easily released to serve the new mission. It takes a deal of altruism to pry a missionary loose from a reliable, experienced evangelist, on whom the success of the work in some section of his field seems to depend.

The man who accompanied Captain Bickel on his first cruise, though unprepossessing in appearance and poorly educated, was an earnest fellow,

with a good degree of native ability, and an acceptable speaker. He was not daunted by the hardships and hard work which his position brought him. His words went home to the hearts of the Islanders. But there was a bad streak in his moral nature, not fully removed by grace, and he failed to live up to the standard of truth and honesty which a Christian worker must maintain. This flaw lost him his opportunity to be numbered among the Shepherds of the Isles. He came back to Yokohama in disgrace. He repented of his fault, and confessed it before the church with strong crying and tears. For a while he ran well. Then some new temptation overcame him. But the Good Shepherd did not forget him. While on the Islands, among others who were impressed by his words was a young man, principal of one of the Island schools. He followed the light and eventually came out a bright earnest Christian. He was deprived of his position, and disowned by his parents and friends. He became a humble pedlar, tramping the Island paths pack on back. Then he was given a position as colporter, and tramped the hills with Bibles in his pack. Finally he came to Yokohama to prepare for the ministry. He remembered the evangelist from Yokohama from whose lips he had first heard the Gospel. He sought him out, and brought him back to the company of Christian people. If still a weak and erring brother, let us hope he hears in his heart the voice of the Great Shepherd, and follows, though afar off.

Another of the Captain's associates in the work, during those early years, and one who gave him

more comfort, was Mr. Imai, who was the evangelist on the ship her third year among the Islands. Mr. Imai's story, related often by himself with telling effect as an *apologia* for Christianity, is a most interesting one, and worthy a place in the Annals of Missions, but cannot be included within the limits set for this book. He had been a Buddhist priest, holding a position of importance in the sect to which he belonged. The kindness and earnestness of a Baptist pastor in Kobe, and a sermon by the late Dr. Deforest of Sendai, were among the means God used for his conversion. He became a Christian evangelist of unusual power. The familiarity with Buddhist doctrine, and the training in moral and religious ideas, which he had gained in the priests' schools, and the experience in public work which his position as priest had brought him, stood him in good stead as a Christian preacher. He has a very pleasing address, and a remarkable gift of language. He is everywhere listened to with delight, and is in great demand as a public speaker on all sorts of religious occasions. During the writer's visit to the ship in 1902 he heard Mr. Imai address the village meetings many times. According to Captain Bickel's policy, the same theme and the same line of thought was presented in every village, but the preacher's manner and style were so pleasing, and his ideas were presented with such a variety of argument and anecdote, or at least of language, that one never wearied of listening to him. Captain Bickel found in him a trustworthy and efficient associate. But Mr. Imai felt that he was called to devote his life to a different kind of work from

that the Islands offered, and presently returned to the mainland. Both with tongue and pen he is doing a splendid work for the Baptist cause in Japan, and for the cause of Christ generally.

Another early Island evangelist was Nagai Minoru. A desire to learn English brought him under missionary influence. He had no wish, along with English, to absorb Christianity. He bore himself as one of those righteous ones who need no repentance. "A Pharisee of Pharisees" was he, according to Captain Bickel. But from the despised Cross there flashed forth upon him a new light, in which he stood revealed to himself. He became the disciple and messenger of the newly discovered Saviour. His space of service among the Islands was brief. He fell a victim to the white plague. Medical and hospital treatment proved unavailing, and he returned to his home in Shozu Shima, to die among his own people and among the Islanders whom he loved. In the Log of the *Fukuin Maru* we have no account of his labours, which were brief and perhaps ineffectual, but only of his death and burial.

"The day was not yet done, another duty awaited us. We must go to visit a dying Christian brother. We had not seen him for months. The grip of an intense suffering lay hard upon him, we heard. Longing, as we often long, that the old sailor in us could be turned by some means into the spiritual adviser and missionary we should be, and searching the corners of our soul for some message of comfort, we went.

"The westerly wind with its bitterly cold bite howled about the little thatched-roof cottage as if to emphasize the fact that life is a struggle. Was it all worth while?

We pulled ourselves together and inwardly got our words of comfort all set out in a row with a sense of shame at our weakness. We were ushered into the presence of the dying man. And then—our lips were dumb. Our words of comfort, like some paltry wares which a merchant is ashamed to show, we kept stowed away. In the presence of a dying man? No, we were in the presence of the victorious spirit of the Master.

"One day that miracle, wrought when God in Christ walked in tender pity among men, and re-wrought again and again all through the centuries, had come to pass in him. The god of selfishness had been cast out, and Christ, gentle, pure, good, reigned supreme. And when laid upon his bed of suffering, the humble neighbours came and stood and wondered. ' 'Tis like stories the priests tell us of the Buddhist saints who lived long ago, but men do not live and die like this.' And then he died—nay, nay, friend, not so. The gentle, humble spirit, dispensing comfort lavishly upon us all, passed from under the crude shelter of the thatched roof into the beautiful portals of the true home of such souls. Then came the little boatswain from the ship to prepare for laying away the poor, worn body. We sat with bowed head in wonder. It seemed but yesterday when this sailor, almost naked, scrambled over the stern. Ignorant, mean, quarrelsome, he gambled, drank and did his worst, and then God's spirit gripped him as it did the other, the educated Pharisee.

"As he moved gently about, with a tact, wisdom and fine feeling we envied, taking quiet charge of all preparations and then turning to care with a woman's tenderness for the bereaved mother and sister, we bowed our head in shame. Is it worth while? The man who comes and mocks, the one who comes for rice, the Pharisee—is it worth while to spend a life on these? My God, my God, how could I doubt Thee? Take my life and use it to the last shred for whomsoever Thou wilt.

"And then we carried him, the evangelist, out; no, not him, for he was not there; only the poor, weary body. There was no sorrow—how could there be?—as we laid the body in the grave dug in the stern rock-soil of an island hill. We looked out on the blue waters where the little ship of the good message lay. We looked beyond and saw island upon island, each in its emerald setting. We looked beyond, and still beyond, to the snow-glistening hills of the mainland, and on again beyond the snow caps, and the eyes of faith prevailed over our dim mortal eyes. We saw the dear Home Land, and it was to us more clear than ever before. Quietly the officiating evangelist's voice rose on the sunlit air. To the villagers the words came as some strange mystery: 'He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' To us they brought a message sweet amid the strife of earth. Yes, it is worth while. May we believe it!"

In a later letter the Captain gives us another fragment of this story.

"Long had we hoped and prayed for an additional evangelist to take the waiting western field. We thought we had at last found him. He was a young man of ability, deep faith and fine character. But the scourge of the land, consumption, laid its hand with relentless hold upon him and he died, nay rather we ought to say, passed in triumph to a better land.

"The western field is still waiting; yet though it waits and the tens of thousands there have no one to warn, to teach, to comfort, still for our brother Nagai Minoru we rejoice, in his having been privileged to lay aside the weariness of earth not only, but in so doing to bear emphatic witness to the power of God to uphold in suffering and death. 'No power of man can make one meet suffering and death like this,' said the sorrowing yet

wondering mother and sister who watched beside him in the little Island cottage. To-day comes word from a far off mainland city, whither they had gone, that they both have come to share the faith of the loved one gone before, and are to be baptized."

But it is time now to introduce to the reader the Five Shepherds of the Isles who became Captain Bickel's permanent associates. And first let us introduce Toda Kushiro, or Mr. K. Toda, as we would write it. Mr. Toda has been in the Island work almost from the beginning. He has not the charming eloquence of Mr. Imai, nor the flaming enthusiasm of Mr. Ito, of whom mention will presently be made. He is what one may call a good, plain, practical preacher, and a patient and faithful worker. In character he is solid, conservative and reliable, and in manner quiet, kindly and serious, not self-assertive but self-respecting, a man easy to trust and to love. As evangelist on the ship, or as shepherd of now one and now another of the Island groups, he has won for himself a good report. Mr. Toda's story is so well told in the "Log of the *Fukuin Maru*," that no apology is needed for transferring it to these pages.

Toda, the Samurai

"Toda Kushiro wore two swords. That meant rank in those days. It meant that he was of *Samurai* family, one of the gentry. His father was *Gokaru*, chief minister of the feudal lord of the Province of Echigo. The father died just before the Rebellion of '67–'71. The son fought a hard, losing fight. He was one of those

who would not be reconciled, even after defeat. Associated with a band of others, some of them to-day prominent men, he plotted the overthrow of the Imperial power. They planned the burning and destruction of temples containing Imperial graves. He and two others were caught in the act and imprisoned for three years. At the end of that time the other two were beheaded, but through some influence still unknown to him he was released.

"The band then plotted the destruction of the Imperial ministers. He went at night to visit some of his colleagues, who had, contrary to the orders of the band, too hastily attacked one of the ministers and dumped him into the Tokyo castle moat as dead, though he afterward recovered. He was followed and seized and again imprisoned. He had on his person the contract of the confederates to which every one had affixed a *keppan* or blood seal. This he managed to get into his mouth and chew up. He was tortured to make him tell who his associates were, but rather than do so sought to take his own life. His method was original. He stood before the judge, behind a heavy lacquered beam or bar, with hands bound to his hips, as a sign that he was a political prisoner, a soldier standing guard beside him. Suddenly raising his foot he kicked the attendant guard in the pit of the stomach, and thus gaining time dashed his head against the heavy lacquered bar with all the force of a powerful body, in the hope of ending life and saving his friends.

"He was unconscious for two days but was revived. Evidence failing he was tortured again, but without avail, and after some months was set free. Still unconvinced of the futility of his cause he plotted farther, finally being hunted and hounded in the hills as an outlaw. According to all accounts, however, he was through all this a man of high ideals and clean personal life, his one failing being an inherited liking for the

brew of his fathers, *sakè*, plus a good appetite. The former has been long since set aside, the latter still holds sway in a healthy body.

"Now even outlaws need food, and one with a physique like Mr. Toda's needs a double portion. The hills afforded but meagre pickings. The Capital looked promising but dangerous, unless, perchance, he behaved himself politically. Hunger drove him in one night, and Providence did the rest, by letting him turn a corner in the dark and run bodily into and half over an old chum of slighter build. The old chum looked hale and hearty. Mr. Toda looked worried, and as lean as a naturally heavy man can look.

"The chum took Mr. Toda home and asked him how he fared. He confessed to being at the old patriotic game, and, rather resenting the cheerful smile of his chum, asked him what *he* was doing. The answer put new life into Mr. Toda, in that he took to his legs forthwith as though the Evil One were after him. He would have escaped but for his friend's restraining hand. The cause of his intended flight was that his chum had cheerfully confessed to having become a Christian. To have forsaken the Cause was bad enough, but to have become a Christian was to add treachery to treachery!

"To make a long story short, the Christian's love prevailed, the hard heart was softened. The love of Christ entered the heart, giving a new view-point, new ideals, new hope, new life. Mr. Toda became a Christian and later on a Christian worker. He has two wounds. One is a great scar into which you can lay three fingers, on the calf of his leg. He got this in the Rebellion, when the other fellows got the whip hand, and having ambushed him whittled a piece out of him before he fought his way through. He is proud of it, but he is more so of a finger half bitten off by a man who fiercely attacked him while as a soldier of the King of kings he was proclaiming the love of the crucified and

hated 'Yaso.' The man was imprisoned, but Mr. Toda visited him and led him to Christ. The same spirit that of old did not let him know when he was beaten has caused him in the name of the Lord of Hosts to hold on in places where others would have given up the fight long since."

Mr. Toda is serving the Master, in his quiet, patient, unostentatious way, at Agenosho, in Oshima, in the Southwestern Division, the group of islands at the far end of the Inland Sea.

Another of the Five, and perhaps the most remarkable of them all, is Ito Menosuke, who as pastor of the *Fukuin Maru* Church, is in a way the Chief of the Shepherds, *primus inter pares*. Mr. Ito, after a youth of wild dissipation, heard the voice of Christ calling him to repentance. He is one of the Twice-Born Men who are the boast of the Gospel, in every land and in every age. The Christian zeal he displayed after his conversion, and his marked ability in public address, brought him to the notice of those interested in the Inland Sea Mission, and he was sent down to the ship on trial. After proving himself a true disciple and an efficient evangelist he returned to Yokohama and took a course of study in the Theological Seminary. During part of his course, and after his graduation, he was in charge of a very successful mission hall in the city. Having been saved out of the depths himself, he was fitted to sympathize with, and to win influence over, those whom sin had submerged. He was an eloquent and forceful speaker, with true evangelistic fervour. He had a most valuable fellow-worker in his earnest and

capable Christian wife, whom he had married after his conversion. Such a man, such a couple, was just what Captain Bickel needed to put in charge of one of the Island districts. Let us ask the Captain, who knows him best, to tell us his story.

Ito, the Zealot

"Tourists visiting the Hongwanji Temple at Kyoto are shown great ropes made of human hair. These represent the offerings of thousands of Buddhist women. Chief among the contributing women were those of Goshiu. Ito Menosuke was born there. He was a strongly religious man, a religious zealot. A strong Buddhist was he, of the militant type. He was prominent as a lay-leader in Buddhist circles and head of a Buddhist young men's league. True he drank like the proverbial fish, and led such a life that the parents of his wife, into whose family he had been adopted, forbade him the house and divorced him. All this was openly done and known. Still, if any one thinks this need interfere with his being a religious man and even a leader, that person knows little of the ways and thoughts, social and religious, of the East.

"His zeal was great. The religion of his fathers and their fathers was in danger. A great enemy had appeared. The religion of the uncouth foreigner threatened to undermine the faith of the faithful. Something must be done. A Laymen's Movement was planned. The recognition of Buddhism as the state religion of Japan was the one hope. Consultations were many and great. Amid much feasting and drinking great plans were made. A delegation must go to Tokyo and interview the political leaders. For this purpose much 'Honourable Thanks Money' would be needed. This was collected from the faithful. Ito San, defender of the faith of his fathers, was one of the delegates.

"Tokyo was reached and the 'Honourable Thanks Money' applied to the consciences of many men, as thanks for services hoped for. Now the art of a half promise; procrastination with ample excuses and profuse apologies; postponements and final evasion, is one highly developed in the Orient far and near. Thus the delegation, after delivering itself of the 'Honourable Thanks Money,' made up its mind to await developments and incidentally to have a good time.

"This was the undoing of our friend Ito San, in so far as the faith of his fathers went. While he waited a lady missionary held a meeting in the very lodging house in which he lived. He went to hear and oppose, only to be stricken in conscience and to see himself as a blind leader of the blind. He was converted, thoroughly converted. His conscience being quickened, he was at once shut off from bribes and emoluments by his own act. But he must live. He therefore joined the Tokyo police force. His zeal in service, and his witness to the new light in his soul, soon gave him the name of '*Yaso no omari san,*' the 'Jesus Bobby.'

"His activity as a Christian led to the thought that he might be made a useful worker. He was sent first to the *Fukuin Maru,* and then to the Seminary in Yokohama. Now some folk sum up a missionary's duties in about the following words: 'Beat a drum, shout hallelujah, get some people converted, and then go on to the next batch!' Never a greater mistake was made. Setting aside the question of the propriety of drum beating and hallelujahing, it is just after conversion that the work begins, especially in regard to those who are to be leaders. Some are all fight and lack sense. That means not work, Christian work, but a row. Some are all fears and misgivings and call it modesty. Some cannot steer a straight course, but run after fads and 'isms,' and call it special piety or consecration. Some play the fiddle of independence or nationalism and lose

all sense of proportion and balance. To guide, to encourage, to restrain with gentleness, at times with severity if need be, but always with love; being ready to risk resentment and misunderstood motives, until these children become established in the faith, that they again may safely lead others, *this* is one most important part of a true missionary's work, and is often a long and weary process. This work was needed with our friend Ito San, and badly needed, but the reward of those who bore with him and led him is great, and for their patience we give thanks to God to-day.

"After faithful, valuable service in Yokohama as evangelist in charge of the Mission Hall, in which many through his zeal were led to Christ, he came to the Islands of the Inland Sea. Here as pastor of the *Fukuin Maru* Baptist Church, he is loved and esteemed by his co-workers, by the believers, and by the Island people at large, for he has now not only zeal coupled with judgment, but he has also a broad, deep sympathy for those who err, be their errors those of conduct or of faith. He himself had erred grievously, erred both in conduct and faith, and having been led by the love of Christ and the example of God's children to better and higher things, his words and deeds are those of one who has passed through the refining fires of experience. They hit home."

If the material were at hand, and space permitted, doubtless a life story of equal interest with those of Toda the Samurai, and Ito the Zealot, could be told of each of the other district evangelists. Years of darkness, perplexity and despair, or of pride and self-righteousness, or of riotous living and deep degradation; a strange leading of Providence into contact with Christian doctrine, or rather with a Christian life, with Christ incarnate

in one of His disciples; a wonderful experience of conversion, with old things passed away and all things become new; years of loving service of the divine Master, amid persecution, opposition and hardship,—each such life would provide material for a story full of meaning and interest. Each is a testimony to the power of the Gospel to renew and transform the lives of men, making those even who were most headlong, or headstrong, in the pursuit of evil, imitators of the holy and lowly Saviour, and fellow-workers with Him in the building of the Kingdom of Heaven.

We can give the story of but one more of the Shepherds of the Isles, that of Evangelist Shibata, whose earnest, faithful ministry is bringing many of the Islanders to a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus.

Shibata, the Prodigal

"Shibata Otoye by name, he was manager of a modest export firm belonging to his uncle. He felt he was on top. All he had to do was to manage, and have a good time. He did; he drank, gambled and played up generally. He did it all with a will, he made debts to the tune of *Yen* 10,000 with his uncle's money, and then stepped down and out. He went from bad to worse, becoming a *Soshi*, a type of semi-political rough and blackmailer. Down the steep ladder to perdition he went, helter-skelter, until finally one cold winter night, clothed in nothing but a thin summer garment, the last thing left to him, he laid his head upon the rails some miles outside of Tokyo and waited for the coming of the train that should put an end to his misery.

"The train being late his mind reviewed his life. It was wasted, useless. He had never been a Buddhist.

Of *Samurai* rank, he had been taught chiefly on the lines of Confucianism. Like a dimly flickering lamp a special thought had always been present with him regarding the meaning of *Ten* and *Ten-tei* in the teaching of the great sage of Cathay. With his head pillowed upon the rails, as he looked up to the stars, he felt that *if* this *Ten-tei* meant, as some said, a being of power above, an unseen ruler of the universe, then what good could it do, by way of restitution for an ill-spent life, to throw that life away as it was now? But how could he change? What hope was there? Had he not tried and failed? Then he remembered that some one had said that the 'Yaso' people, the Christians, dealt with such as he. He was seized with a sudden desperate hope, jumped up and ran. He was weak for lack of food, but ran till he reached the confines of the great city, and then day dawned and he, being ashamed, hid himself away till night. When night came, slinking along under the eaves of the houses, he sought a Christian church. He saw a well-lit building. Forgetful of all but his own misery he plunged in, and going to the very front listened in astonishment. The sermon ended, he was so overcome that he forgot those around him and rushing to the platform asked the preacher who had told him of his life and doings. The preacher said he did not know him, and asked what his name might be. 'But you do know me, for you have told my whole life story. My name is Shibata.'

"'What,' said the preacher, 'are you he? Your mother is a member here, and has been praying for you and so have we all, that God might find you out.'

"'There must be some mistake, my mother is not a Christian; though, of course, I have not seen or heard of her for four years or more, nor she of me. She is a strong Buddhist.'

"'Yes, yes, your mother was that, it is true. She fasted and chastised herself, often subjecting herself to the most painful form of the Honourable Hundred

Penances that you might be saved; but finding no help or peace she was led here by a friend two years ago. Since then she has been pleading with God for your salvation, not knowing whether you lived or not.'

"Thus Shibata first turned to the light. Temptations were hard and many. How should he live? No one would trust him, for had he not been a *Soshi* of the worst type? He found work as a labourer in a printing office, and sought permission of the proprietor to learn typesetting after closing time. He did, and became a compositor. He was so overwhelmed with God's mercy in saving him that he felt he must work for others. This he did so effectually that his brother, a Christian, urged him to devote all his time to preaching, while he, the brother, worked and supported them both.

"Thus he preached here and there in many places with such success that his church urged him to take charge of a chapel as a regularly-recognized evangelist. This he longed to do, but felt he could not with the stain on his character of a *Yen* 10,000 debt, the result of evil living, still unpaid. While praying and trying to decide how to give a final reply to the church, he received a letter from his uncle who was then not yet a Christian. The uncle said he had heard of the great change that had taken place in him, and as a token of the joy at this change, he enclosed a clean receipt for the *Yen* 10,000 debt! With tears of gratitude Shibata wrote his letter of acceptance to the church.

"He has been an earnest, faithful, effective worker for years now, and has led many to Christ. We value him much in the *Fukuin Maru* work. What higher praise of him can there be than to say that as it was with the Master so it is with him: the common people hear him gladly. And if, as he speaks of God's love, at times the tears well up unbidden, what wonder, for some of us that have had much forgiven, love much, and what

more noble tears can a man shed than tears of love and gratitude?"

In 1915 Mr. Shibata was ordained as assistant pastor of the *Fukuin Maru* Church. He is stationed on the Island of Hirado, as the shepherd of the four deep sea island groups, with their 200,000 inhabitants, and holds regular meetings at fifteen places, from Iki to the Gotos. "We thank God for such a worker in such a place. He is a man of peculiar power. Those who have read the sketch of his life will understand the source of this power."

It is men like these, whom Captain Bickel gathered about him, and whom he made his evangelistic mates, his lieutenants, his District Shepherds, his fellow-missionaries, his brothers in the labour and triumph of the Gospel. Others had led them to Christ. In distant places God had laid hold on them and had made them His messengers. Captain Bickel had recognized their potential value. He was a keen judge of character, quick to discern both the good and evil, the weakness and the strength, of a man. He was a wise and sympathetic leader and teacher, eager to approve and develop the elements of goodness and strength in his chosen helpers. He won their confidence, their admiration and their affection, and bound them to himself and to the Mission to the Islanders by his own example of consecration, and by his spirit of humility, love, and brotherliness. He never said to them "Go," but always, "Come." He called them to no toil, nor hardship, nor self-sacrifice, in which he did not lead the way. If he demanded much of them, he demanded far more of himself.

Pastor Shibata with group of Christians at Agenosho, Oshima

He summoned them to heroism, which is the only summons which will win true men, and in his own life showed what Christian heroism is. Sometimes they disappointed and grieved him, and misunderstood him, and thought he was a hard master, demanding labour and sacrifice beyond reason. He might have said to them as did Christ to His disciples, "How long shall I be with you? How long must I suffer you?" But as with Christ, his nobleness, his love and sympathy at length overcame.

"The evangelists gradually noticed," writes Mr. Briggs, in his memorial article in the *Japan Evangelist*, "that the Captain worked three hours to their one; that he always carried the heavy stereopticon and gas-tank on his own back, and gave them a little bundle of tracts or the lantern; that he was always planning for their comfort and never for his own; and it came to be realized that instead of a hard taskmaster he was a splendid leader, and earnest workers became proud to follow him."

One of the most vital parts of our Lord's ministry was the Training of the Twelve. Captain Bickel has put much of his life into his five evangelists. In them he still lives and speaks and toils. Because of what he has been to them, and of what he has made them, the Inland Sea Mission did not die with its founder. Even if the Little White Ship should no more come sailing down the west, the light from the five centres will glow and grow, and the day will come toward which the Captain yearned, when in all the Islands of the Inner and Outer Seas the idols shall be abolished, and the Island Folk shall know no god but God.

XIII

WINNING THE ISLANDERS

BESIDES the material obstacles which had to be overcome before our Missionary-Mariner could gain even physical access to the various parts of his widely extended parish,—thousands of miles of difficult channels to be navigated, and thousands of miles of rough hill paths to be trodden,—there were obstacles of a much more serious nature, moral and spiritual hindrances, which barred him and his message from the Islanders' hearts. In fact, on the spiritual side of his mission he had before him three definite tasks, the accomplishment of all of which was essential to final success. These were, the Christianizing of the Crew, the Training of the Evangelists, and the Winning of the Islanders. An earlier chapter has told how the Seven Sailors, through hourly contact with the life of Christ as incarnated in their Captain, were changed from a rough, dissolute, godless gang of thieves, liars and gamblers, to a company of humble, earnest Christian men, confederate with the Captain in his spiritual campaign. We have also seen the several evangelists whom he associated with himself in the work become increasingly worthy, under the inspiration of his example, and through his wise and

sympathetic leadership, to be called the Apostles of the Inland Sea, the Shepherds of the Isles. These two tasks accomplished, the fulfillment of the third became automatically far more rapid and easy. Failing in these, even a super-mariner and super-missionary could have only a very limited success in the other. With the ship's company Christian from skipper to cabin boy, and five good men and true in the evangelistic centres working heart to heart with their leader, the Winning of the Islanders was a foregone conclusion. But while a Christian crew and a trained corps of preachers were yet in the making, siege was being laid daily to the Islanders' hearts, and with every passing month came evidences that the siege was not in vain.

In our chapter upon the Island Folk mention was made of the strong hold which Shintoism and Buddhism, in grossly superstitious forms, had on the people; of their conservatism, insularity mental as well as geographical, and of their deeply rooted, dyed-in-the-wool, centuries-old repugnance to the very name of Christianity. *Kirisutan* was synonymous with rebel, traitor and outlaw. *Yaso* was a term of contempt, of hatred and ill omen, a name wherewith to check the naughty pranks of children. Japanese standards of politeness and hospitality might usually ensure a courteous or even kindly treatment of the "long foreign priest," merely as a foreigner; but to help forward his work would be unfilial to the Honourable Ancestors of Many Generations, unpatriotic toward Great Japan, and disloyal to the Imperial House,—the three cardinal and unpardonable sins. "Ask for the old paths,

and walk in them," and "Mother's religion is good enough for me," are good sound Island maxims, in which subsist the beginning, middle and end of true wisdom.

The writer, during his three summer visits, of a month each, to the Inland Sea, during the early years of the Mission, met many of the Island people, of all ranks and ages, by the wayside, on the beach, in the fields and in their homes, as well as on the vessel when they came as visitors, and at the public gatherings, both on islands where the *Fukuin Maru* work had already been introduced, and at places then visited for the first time, and he deems it only fair to the Islanders to say that he remembers no occasion when he was treated with apparent discourtesy or unkindness. The politeness, and at least outward kindliness, which he has almost invariably met among the Japanese of the mainland, during a residence of thirty years, characterized also these simple-minded villagers of the *Seto-Nai-Kai*. But this does not mean that either the Mainlanders or the Islanders are clamouring for the foreign religion and just longing for a chance to get converted. There is a triple wall of ignorance, superstition and prejudice that must be broken through before the new teaching can have any approach to their hearts. On the Islands this wall seemed thicker, solider and more impregnable than elsewhere in Japan.

The very first step, then, toward the evangelization of the Islands, must be to overcome these prejudices and gain a thoughtful hearing for the Christian message. Well begun is half done. To make the Little White Ship a welcome visitor, and

the Captain a trusted friend, was to ensure in due time the winning of the Islanders to Christ Himself.

As every missionary knows, to win a single village is no light achievement. Here were hundreds of inhabited islands, and on many of the islands several villages each, each village a world in itself, a community apart, living a separate life, with the blue sea for its front door, and a rough hill slope for its back door, and no neighbours. Siege must be laid to each of these villages, separately. By and by, when the Mission Vessel should have become a familiar sight, and good reports of her should have begun to spread from island to island, the still outholding communities would grow more ready to give the foreign teacher a hearing; but at first it must be village by village, island by island, that an approach and a welcome must be won.

The visible, secular aids toward winning such a welcome were chiefly those comprised in the vessel herself. "No other kind of a messenger," writes Missionary Briggs, "would so hold the eyes of the people, or create so great a desire for closer acquaintance, as this ship, so different from and so much more beautiful than the craft they were accustomed to see. The sight awakened interest, the learning that it was a Jesus ship aroused distrust; but all the time curiosity as to what the ship could do and the desire for a closer inspection were busy and brought crowds to see the vessel, while others waited and watched."

The Islanders could understand a ship; they hardly knew, except by hearsay, of any other vehicle. There is only one island that can boast

even of a rickshaw, much less of a carriage. If the Captain could have made his rounds in a Chapel Car, a Missionary Automobile, or an Evangelistic Aeroplane, it would have created more of a sensation, but less of an abiding interest. These shore dwellers, whose world was composed, like all Gaul, of three parts—islands, sea and ships—could appreciate the little Mission Vessel, her seaworthy and good sailing qualities, the fine lines of her hull, the sweep of her spars, her spread of canvas with the wind abeam, the ship-shapeness of all her equipment, and the absolute order and purity that reigned throughout her. That so goodly a ship, the cost of which might furnish homes for a whole village, should be built and equipped by foreigners from beyond the western ocean, not to trade withal nor for a pleasure yacht, but for the single purpose of bringing to every island a knowledge of the foreigners' religion, and of persuading the Islanders to worship the foreigners' God, would be matter for much thought, when once believed, as presently came to pass. She was a good sound craft, anyway, and perchance the religion whose messenger she was might after all not be so evil and corrupt as it had been painted.

But more effectual than the favourable impression made by the vessel was that gradually, and for the most part unconsciously, created by her Captain. From the first his manly strength and courage would arrest their attention. Head and shoulders above the Island men, broad of back and strong of arm, swift in action, virile and capable in mind and body was he, able to sail his ship through their most treacherous channels, to out-

weather a gale in the Bingo Nada, and to handle an untamed Japanese crew, who feared not God neither regarded man. He could tramp the rough hill paths, leagues on end, in summer's heat and winter's storm.

"To the Islanders," continues Mr. Briggs, "the Captain was a fierce looking man of rapid, almost wild movements. But the intensity did not seem wild when he was going to the rescue of sailors or fishermen dashed by wind and tide on a lee shore. When the people of a village stood shrieking at the sight of a nearly blind old woman, with a baby on her back, fallen from the twenty foot retaining wall into the sea, the Captain's swift plunge to the rescue did not appear wild. When a large building in Shimomura was ablaze, and the whole ship's crew with disciplined rapidity controlled the mob and extinguished the fire, distrust was displaced in many hearts by admiration and gratitude."

He was a man's man, the practical, hard-headed Islanders discovered. "The men found that he could talk of the things that interested them. With his wider nautical knowledge and keen eyesight he could give them points even in regard to the ships that sailed their waters. His opinion of the weather was worth asking; the intricate tides were known to him." Had he been merely a missionary they might have been inclined to regard him with mild contempt, as they regard the lazy and useless priests of the Island temples; but a Sea-Captain was a different matter, especially such a wide-awake sailor and seasoned salt as he.

They became aware, too, that here was a man of

finer stuff than the Islands had produced, one of nature's noblemen. Democratic he was to the core, and plebeian, if to be democratic is to be cosmopolitian in sympathy and find companions in men of every class, if to be plebeian is to condescend to men of low estate, and see in the humblest labourer a brother. But there was something innately aristocratic in his mien and bearing, something patrician in his spirit, something inherited from the days when the Von Bickels were Barons of the Castle, some strain of a higher nobility gained from the refining influences of the home in Hamburg, gained most of all in daily companionship with Christ.

He was evidently earnest and sincere, however absurd his theology might be, a man of pure heart and a clean life. He was gentle, too, and kindly. Foreigners at the open ports had the name of being rude, harsh and haughty in their dealings with the Japanese common people. But here was a foreigner with proper self-respect, indeed, but self-forgetful; humble, patient and friendly; accessible to the poorest and meanest. His tact, courtesy and sympathy, his eagerness to aid any one in difficulty, to comfort any one in sorrow,—these were keys that unlocked their hearts.

Behind his foreign dress, his foreign face, his yet broken Japanese speech, they saw a real man, of a sort new to their experience, one to be trusted and loved. The immediate impression he made was, that he had come to be a friend, and are not human hearts on the Islands, as elsewhere, hungry for love? More than the word preached at the successive meetings, he was himself the Message.

In a sense, the Word was made flesh and dwelt among them, and it is always the incarnate word which speaks home to men's hearts. It was because he was a veritable Christian, embodying the Christian spirit, a man with the mind of the Master, that the *Fukuin Maru* Mission meant the dawn of a new day to all the little Island world. Simple-minded people began to listen to him, to appreciate him, to trust him, by and by even to love him. It was only lewd fellows of the baser sort, or self-important officials, or priests whose particular temple of Diana might suffer loss of revenue through the spread of the new faith, who could continue to oppose.

"They commenced," says Mr. Briggs again, "to pass around stories of little things in the Captain's life. He was always unmistakably the master, but instead of making his fellow-workers serve him, he always carried the largest share of the burdens. They saw him tramping over the mountains with the heavy stereopticon and fixtures on his back, while the Japanese evangelist carried a little bundle of tracts and a lantern. The story went around of one of the evangelists being reluctant to wet his good clothes in crossing a swollen stream, so the Captain carried the baggage across, and then took the preacher, good clothes and all, on his back and landed him on the other shore. A fat evangelist would repeat with tears the story of being out on the mountain one night when a cold storm broke upon them, and the Captain insisted on taking off his own coat to wrap around his companion's shivering form. A lighthouse-keeper's wife made much of the fierce looking foreigner

taking her baby and bundles and seeing them all safely across a dangerous pass in the cliffs.

"Still, the disappearance of distrust and the coming of confidence was so gradual that no one realized the change until the time came when he would be sent for, or waited for, to help decide some important family matter, it might be a boy's future, it might be the dealing with a prodigal son, or an unfaithful and abusive husband, or it might be the principal of a school leaving the matter of punishing some scholar to be decided by the Captain. Not until such calls came to really consume much of his time was it realized that these people, whose hearts were steeled against Christianity and its representatives, had come to wait with eagerness for the sight of the ship, and to count it a joy and help to meet the Christian Captain."

The Jesus-Captain of the Jesus-Ship, like the Jesus of the Gospels, went about doing good, not spectacularly nor professionally, merely as good missionary tactics, but instinctively, inevitably, as Jesus Himself did, in a free service of love. In time of storm he succoured those who were in peril on the sea, in time of accident he afforded first aid to the injured. To the sick he came with medicine, to those whose hearts were perplexed and despairing, with comfort and cheer. He was everybody's friend. It was a new phenomenon in the Inland Sea. They had never known love after this fashion. The same Christ-filled personality which we have seen winning and transmuting the vessel's crew, and lifting to new heights of service and sacrifice the little company of evangelists, soon began to draw also the people of the Islands. Slowly, slowly it

was, for the days or hours of his stay at any given place must be few, and it was only glimpses of his life the Islanders could get; but bit by bit their suspicion, contempt or hostility were replaced by confidence, admiration and affection. If the Captain was a Christian, a Jesus-Teacher, then the new doctrine, they presently began to admit, however strange and mysterious and apparently absurd it might be, could hardly be an unmitigated evil.

And when the light of the Christian life which they saw in the Captain began to glow in the Shepherds of the Isles, men in whose hearts he had kindled a divine ardour, men of their own blood and speech in whom the foreigner's Message became vernacular; and when they saw this same unearthly beauty of love and sacrifice in the very sailors of the forecastle, lads from their own islands, whose wild lives had been village talk, the Islanders had come a long way on the road to surrender.

Nor must we forget the winsomeness of the Gospel itself. In beauty, interest and attractiveness there is nothing to compare with it in any of the pagan religions, not even in the sacred books of Buddhism. The narrative of the life of Christ, His works of mercy and words of love, His sacrificial death on the cruel Cross, His glorious Resurrection, makes a strong appeal to every normal human heart. Even from the mere printed page that story speaks home. The first Protestant Christians in Japan, we are told, were Wakasano-Kami and members of his family, who were converted through his finding, in 1855, a Dutch Testament floating on the waters of Nagasaki

Harbour. It is not uncommon, in heathen lands, to hear of individuals, or even villages, being led to embrace Christianity through the reading of a copy of the New Testament that has come into their possession. But much more winsome is the Gospel spoken in simplicity, earnestness and love, by a human voice. Embodied in the ship, incarnated in the Captain, presented in a simple language which all could understand and a warmth of sincerity and earnestness which all could feel, it is not strange that it early began to meet a response in the Islanders' hearts.

"The sower went forth to sow his seed." Luke, in the original, gives us the words in a line of perfect poetry, as smooth and sweet as a line from a Greek lyric, as though to hint to us the beauty of the morning and the hope of harvest. In the Inland Sea Mission there has been both sowing and reaping; sowing constant, widespread and bountiful; of reaping, a sheaf of first fruits, earnest of the real ingathering by and by.

The deep faith which possessed the Captain's soul that the Inland Sea Mission had been ordained of God for the Christianization of these long neglected Islanders we believe God will not put to shame, and we look for days of large ingathering in the not distant future. The facts and figures given in the story of the Mission convey but a very inadequate idea of how broadly the seed has been scattered and how widespread is the hidden influence of the Ship, the Captain and the Message in the hearts of the people. The Inland Sea Islands are like a Japanese field of winter wheat, the chief part of which is still under ground. A big

Baptism at Tonosho, Shozu Shima

mat of roots forms during the long winter months, when above the surface the eye can scarce detect any change, and when the spring rains and warm winds come the wheat rushes up into strength and fruitfulness. One can almost see it grow. In most of the Island world the seed of the Kingdom is still in the period of secret and silent growth. Here and there a few ears have reached an early maturity, but these are only a kind of first fruits of an abundant harvest that may be confidently expected in the near future.

"In that day there shall be an handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains: the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon."

Whither Thou sendest,
Whither Thou leadest,
  Thither my journey.
Eastward or westward,
Northward or southward,
Dayward or nightward,
Joyward or woeward,
Homeward or starward,
So it be Thee-ward,
  Thither my journey.

XIV

WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF THE ISLANDS

IN the Missionary Movement in Japan, the honour with which Christianity crowns childhood and womanhood is not forgotten. Fortunately, the women of the Empire, at least among the common people, are not condemned by custom to lives of seclusion. When evangelistic services are held they form a large part of the audience, and there are about as many women as men enrolled in the churches. Much has been done, also, in the name of Christ, for the moral and social elevation of the womanhood of Japan. Woman is ceasing to be a chattel, and becoming a person. The right of a man to dispose of his wife or daughter as it may please him, even selling her if he will into a life of shameful slavery, has been successfully challenged. The Christian forces, with the Salvation Army in the van, are lined up against the powerful brothel-masters, and against the strongly entrenched system of licensed vice with its tens of thousands of female slaves. Concubinage has fallen into disrepute, and Emperor Yoshihito is the husband of one wife. The land is dotted with high grade Christian schools for girls; and by the establishing of women's universities the state has acknowledged the value of female education.

Thanks to the influence, direct and indirect, of the teaching of the Son of Mary, the women of Japan are coming into their own.

Childhood has not suffered such wrongs in Japan as in many heathen nations. Babies are almost always welcome, even girl babies. Japanese youngsters as a rule are well fed, well clad, and well cared for, so far as the ability of the parents permits. The cities and towns are full of boys and girls playing happily in the streets thereof, as in the ideal city of Scripture. Modern Japan provides a modern education for practically all her children, even those in the remotest hamlets of the mountains. Christianity is making her own contribution to the children's welfare. Christian Kindergartens have brought brightness to many a child's life. Everywhere is the Sunday school. The Sunday-school army in Japan already numbers above a hundred and fifty thousand. In our Baptist Missions the Sunday-school scholars outnumber the church members by three to one. Providentially, Sunday is the weekly school holiday, affording an opportunity to gather the boys and girls for Christian instruction. One of the great sights of Tokyo is the annual Sunday-school Rally, when many thousands of gaily dressed, bright faced little lads and lasses gather in Hibiya Park, with banners and music. It is Christianity, too, which is seeking to save the children from falling under the influence of alcohol and tobacco, and is lifting its hand against the hungry Moloch of modern industry, to whose rapacity multitudes of the children of the poor are being sacrificed.

In the Inland Sea work the women and children

are charter members, so to speak. When Captain Bickel accepted the Inner and Outer Isles for his parish he dedicated his life to all the Islanders—all the men, all the women and all the children. There are nearly as many names of women as of men on the *Fukuin Maru* Church list, and myriads of children have learned to love the Little White Ship and her Captain, and have learned something also of Him who loved the children and gathered them into His arms. The time when the long-suffering Skipper was greeted at the village beaches by crowds of disorderly boys crying "foreign fool," "evil pig," and like affectionate terms, soon passed; and instead, as the vessel threaded the island channels, from the hills above would float down the music of childish voices singing some of the songs of Zion. To our Captain, with his chivalrous and tender courtesy toward all women, and his affectionate kindliness toward all children, the blessing which the vessel brought to the women and children of the Islands was one of the deepest joys of his work. One of his published articles, dealing with this topic, is given below, almost entire. This article was written in the eleventh year of the vessel's work.

Island Women and Children

On the wooded hillsides, in the lowland fields, in the farmyards, in the ships, in the boats, at the looms, in the houses, young and bright, care-worn and thoughtful, old and haggard, independent yet docile, hard-working and patient ever, they are here in their tens of thousands—these Island women.

They are here in their hundreds of thousands, these

Island children, in the schools or more often not, in the homes or more often not, helping in the fields, romping under one's feet, playing "ride a horse to market" by order of parental authority, which in America would mean that eight-year-old Bill must nurse five-year-old Jack, Jack being tied to Bill's back in such a way as to present a strange mixture of legs and arms when Bill plays "hopscotch," as presently he does.

The workers of the *Fukuin Maru* have set themselves the task, *not* of giving a knowledge of Christian truth to certain portions of the population of this wide field, but to giving a knowledge of God and His love to every man, woman and child who can be persuaded or beguiled into listening to the message. That in such a vast undertaking work for women and children must have a large part, need not be stated. That to attempt to meet the wide need by local efforts in the form of kindergarten work, women's societies, mothers' meetings, etc., would demand an expenditure and a staff of workers such as we dare not hope to see, is also apparent.

We had to plan for the women and children as we did for the men, on large, broad lines, seeking to reach all in some way, while not neglecting those whose heart attitude might claim special attention and help.

It is true that we have two *Yugi-in*, a type of kindergarten not needing an expensive plant. These are doing a successful work. One is situated in the East-Central Island Division at Setoda, the other in the Western Island Division at Agenosho, a town of ten thousand inhabitants. Both are carried on in the spacious local preaching places. The workers of both are engaged in Bible-woman's and Sunday-school work, going often ten or fifteen miles in all manner of weather in a small boat to hold a children's meeting, or women's meeting, after the kindergarten work in the forenoon is over, or on Sundays. It is true that mothers' meetings and women's

societies have been formed in some places by the evangelists' wives and the kindergarten workers. It is true that in another place a boys' and girls' night school is carried on, and in another a sewing class. We rejoice in these and long to have more such efforts made. That they are not made is due to lack of means and the vastness of the field.

But our hope is not in these things, good as they are. It is in the work of public appeal and teaching. This is the widespread and general work and mainstay, while the other work, that of the kindergartens, women's societies and mothers' meetings, is but incidental and local. Women and children are present in their thousands in the meetings held by the ship in the four hundred towns and villages visited. In these meetings a point is made of having a special talk for children before the large general meeting is held. Women and children by their thousands are in the meetings held in the fifty regular preaching places to which the evangelists itinerate. Women and children in their thousands visit the ship and hundreds come to special women's or children's meetings held on board. Children in their hundreds attend the special children's meetings on Sunday-school lines held by the worker in the colportage vessel, *No. 2 Fukuin Maru*. These children's meetings, held in many places where no regular Sunday school is yet established, are a great feature in the Island work.

Children in hundreds, yes, and women too, attend regularly the forty Sunday schools established in as many towns and villages in the Islands. In these Sunday schools there is uniform instruction based on a series of Scripture lesson-cards, specially prepared, published and sent out from the ship. These Sunday schools are, moreover, not what are known as "Street Sunday schools." We know these scholars and their parents and have access to their homes, as we have to a thousand other homes, and we have their confidence.

Setoda Kindergarten Graduates, March, 1917

We are no longer doing mission work with strangers, for in many places the ship and its workers are a part of the village life. To create this confidence we have toiled for years in these Islands, but the result of the toiling and the possibilities opening before us on every hand cannot be expressed in words. We will mention but a few of the evidences of these results, taken at random.

Whereas we reported ten organized Sunday schools last year, and twenty-six in January this year, we now have forty fully organized and requests in hand from over twenty other towns and villages for the establishment of regular Sunday-school work as opposed to the periodical children's meetings. Were means available these would be established within a month and more would rapidly follow. Two thousand people were gathered in a recent Sunday-school rally, the banners of eleven Sunday schools from eleven different islands floating bravely in the breeze at a place where not long since we were refused even house-room.

A number of girls have been induced to seek education in various Christian schools on the mainland and have become Christians there. Girls and boys and young women have been introduced to permanent Christian influences. The wrongs and sufferings of many women in Island homes have been adjusted, and others saved from serious temptations and wrong.

Eight thousand people were gathered in our impressive Sunday-school services at Christmas, hearing an earnest presentation of the old story of the revelation of God's love in the coming of the Christ-child. These are but a few examples; the work is so widespread that they could be indefinitely multiplied.

The work, then, in these Islands for women and children must be regarded as simply an adjunct to the general work of evangelization. It is a large and vital part of a far-reaching, all-embracing plan to lead the

Island people up out of the deep depths of prejudice and superstition to the moral and spiritual heights of a knowledge of God and His love and pardon revealed in Christ. And if in these Islands the love, the tenderness, the purity, the suffering of the Man of Galilee appeal most readily to the children and women, what wonder? Has it not ever been so, from the day when children sang hosannas by the way, from the day when women wept and watched at the foot of His cross? In all lands and at all times to the present day they have most readily responded to His call. May God give us wisdom and power, yes, and a Christlike, all-embracing love, that we may be able to lead these Island women and children to their Father's home.

From the very beginning of the work emphasis was placed on winning the children, the Captain being wise enough to know that the winning of the children means the permanent conquest of the Islands. When a leading man on a certain island which had not proved very hospitable to the new religion condoled with the Captain in a tone of veiled mockery on his failure to make an impression on the people, the Captain calmly replied that the island was already as good as won for Christianity, "For," said he, "we have captured the children, and that means we have captured the island."

The first Sunday school was established in 1901, at Tonosho, on the Island of Shozu, as an integral part of the very first permanent work attempted, in the first evangelistic centre opened; our friend Toda, hero of the two swords, being superintendent, teachers, secretary, treasurer and sexton. During the next ten years the number of schools

steadily increased, as other centres of work were opened, and as the number of available Sunday-school helpers was multiplied, until in 1912 there were more than fifty schools being carried on, with a roll of over three thousand pupils. In addition to these there were held in many places, as opportunity offered, children's meetings, which were ready to blossom out into full fledged Sunday schools, if a mixed metaphor is allowable, so soon as suitable teachers could be secured. There was a constant demand from every direction for the establishing of schools in new places, and almost any year after the movement was under way a score of new schools could have been opened with the glad approval of the Islanders, had there been workers available for carrying them on. As it was, it was necessary to refuse many requests, and up to last year to keep the number of regular Sunday schools down to sixty or so, with a membership of some four thousand. It is pleasant to think what this work for the children means for the progress of Christian work in general among the Islands a few years from now.

One cannot think of a Sunday school, at least in Japan, without thinking also of Christmas, the Festival of the coming of the Christ-child, and pre-eminently the Children's Festival. Christmas is not the least of the blessings which the Little White Ship has brought to the children of the Inland Sea. But how they keep Christmas on the Islands may well form the theme of a separate chapter.

XV

CHRISTMAS IN THE INLAND SEA

IT is a summer evening in Omachi. The day has been hot and sultry, but with sunset a delicious cool breeze draws down from the snow-streaked ranges of the Japanese Alps, the Hida-Shinshu mountains of central Japan, that overlook the valley. As one steps out through the latticed doors of the spacious old building which serves the Christians of Omachi for church and parsonage, and which stands midway of the main thoroughfare of this old-fashioned country town, he finds himself in the midst of a bright and bustling scene. North and south, to the street's ends, before every dwelling is blazing a cheerful little bonfire, and the street is full of boys and girls, with some older people, replenishing these fires, and enjoying their blaze and crackle. It is the eve of the *Bon Matsuri,* or *Odori,* a sort of Feast of All Souls, when for several days the gates of Hades are set open, and the spirits of the dead are suffered to return for a brief visit to their earthly homes. In honour of their coming there has been a general clean-up in the several cemeteries, and housewives have been busy preparing toothsome dishes for the family feast, part of which is set aside for the invisible guests. The tiny bonfire

before each door serves both as a welcome to the returning spirit, and as a light to guide him to his old home, and will be lighted for him again when he takes his journey back to the Land of Shades. It is the yearly family reunion.

In each of the thousand homes of Omachi the feast is kept. No, not in every one. Pastor Kaneko has lighted no bonfire before the parsonage; nor is there any cheerful blaze in front of the home of Deacon Nambu, across the street, the leading lay Christian in the community; nor do the other Christian families scattered through the town share in the festival doings. Their Christian conscience does not permit them to join in the celebration of this heathen festival. And as it is in Omachi, which is mentioned simply as the one of ten thousand similar country towns best known to the writer, so it is also throughout the empire, including the Islands of the Inland Sea. The Christians have lost their summer festival, with all its pleasant social and domestic features. And along with the *Bon* Festival have gone the Festivals of the Spring and Autumn Equinoxes, the Festival of the First Tasting of the New Rice, and other annual celebrations observed throughout the land, for all these are bound up with the old faiths.

In Omachi, and in every town and village, in addition to these nation-wide festivals, are kept year by year the feasts of the local gods whose groves and temples are the beauty spots of the town. On such occasions, in the temple areas, under the shadow of the century-old trees, wrestling, archery and other sports are carried on; and theatricals of a primitive order, a sort of miracle

plays, are performed by comically masked players, supposedly to provide a sort of holiday treat for the resident deity; and in the evening the sacred car in which he is supposed to ride is drawn in noisy procession through the principal streets of the town, by hundreds of shouting worshippers, to the music of flute, fife, and drum. The whole town, or ward, is *en fête,* illuminated with gaily painted lanterns. From all the countryside the farmer folk have gathered to witness the sports and the procession, and to eat and drink with their town cousins. Each of these local festivals is not only a religious but a social and recreational event. And because they are held in honour of heathen gods Christian people must stand aloof from them.

One of the problems facing the Church in Japan, as in other Mission Fields, is: Shall the existing heathen festivals be adopted and purified from idolatrous elements, or shall distinctly Christian festivals be substituted for them? For, without controversy, the Christian community in its social and recreational life must not be left cold and hungry. "Historically all the rites, feasts, ceremonials and celebrations of religion have held something of the nature of play, both in terms of their sociable and congregate spirit, and by virtue of their symbolic nature." Japanese Christianity must have its solemn and joyous feasts and celebrations, with their social element and spirit of play. Of a sociable, gregarious nature, fond of the spectacular, enjoying keenly holiday and festal occasions, they can never be quite satisfied with a religion which would ignore the social side of life, and afford no field for the activity of the spirit of

play. Fortunately the religion that Jesus taught is pre-eminently a social religion, and friendly to all innocent social enjoyments.

Doubtless some of the heathen festivals will eventually be adopted by Christianity, with idolatrous and other objectionable features deleted. Already the chief holiday of the year, the New Year festival, is abundantly observed by both Christians and non-Christians, and so also is the Emperor's birthday, the celebration of neither of these necessitating any idolatrous observances. *Nii-Nami-Sai,* the Festival of the First Tasting of the New Rice, may well become, with slight modifications, the Japanese Christian Thanksgiving, and the Festival of the Spring Equinox, in the season of many flowers, may easily be transferred and transformed into the Christian Spring Festival of Easter. Some of the heathen celebrations may be so radically heathen that they are beyond redemption, and for these we must substitute something that Christianity has in its gift.

Of what we term the church feasts, Christmas is the only one which has so far won a large place for itself in Japan. Easter, with its great hope and joy born of the Resurrection of our Lord, still waits to be naturalized, and is hardly spoken of outside the churches. But the spectacular, picturesque, joyous nature of the Christmas Festival, with its bright decorations and sprightly music, its charming stories of the Shepherds and the Star, the Blessed Mother and the Divine Babe, speaks right home to the Japanese heart. Christmas has not yet, indeed, come to its own in family life, and is not that happy home festival which we

have made it in the West, but it has gained a certain amount of recognition even outside Christian circles. The merchants in the large cities are awake to the commercial use to which the day may be put. Walk down the Ginza in Tokyo on Christmas Eve and you will find a Christmas display in the shop windows rivalling that which an American city can afford. Christmas comes just at the right time of year to find a welcome. New Year, the great universal annual holiday, is at hand, and festivity is in the air. Already the streets are being beautified with tufted pine and feathery bamboo, and brightened with gay coloured flags and lanterns. When one walks abroad Christmas morning and finds the air sweet with the balsam of pines and musical with the whisper of bamboo, and the day full of the colour and bustle of people preparing to keep holiday, it gives him a very Christmassy feeling indeed. The practice of observing Christmas will probably much outrun the general progress of Christianity in Japan, but is in part an index of the growth of Christian work and an aid in the promotion of that work. And that brings us back to the Islanders and their Sunday schools. Outside the large cities one does not find any recognition of the Christmas Festival by the non-Christian public, except as they may be invited to share in it by Christian friends. It is in the churches, the various Christian schools, and especially in the Sunday schools, that the feast is kept. Countless thousands, however, of those not yet believers gather gladly to the Christian celebrations, and enter heartily into the joyous spirit of the occasion. With a hundred and fifty thousand Sun-

day-school scholars, and forty or fifty thousand pupils in Christian schools,—to speak now of Protestant missions only—and with a hundred thousand adult church members, who would hate to miss a Christmas gathering, and with all the non-Christian friends who eagerly accept an invitation to be present, there must be well up to half a million people who year by year listen to the Christmas songs and the Christmas addresses.

Captain Bickel was quick to recognize the use that might be made of Christmas in the Inland Sea work, and through his initiative it speedily became the brightest spot in the year to many thousands of the Island children, and to many thousands of grown-ups, their parents and friends. Christmas on the Islands means a whole series of celebrations, covering sixty islands, strung out for hundreds of miles, and the ship's Christmas campaign lasts from December to February. In the aggregate, four or five thousand children and as many adults are gathered into these Christmas meetings, which are not only of a festive and joyous but of a distinctly religious and evangelistic nature.

Let us take a peep at one of these pleasant gatherings. We are in Setoda, once so hostile, now so friendly to the Mission Vessel. We need not ask the way to the church, everybody seems to be bound there. Arrived at the entrance we find the little yard and court covered with tiny pairs of wooden clogs, the owners of which are seated in close ranks on the matted floor of the audience room. Out-of-doors the December wind strikes to one's marrow, but *hibachi* full of glowing coals, set here and there, make it warm and cozy inside. The

walls are draped with many coloured flags borrowed from the ship, and rows of gay lanterns depend from the ceiling. The room is packed to the limit with the children and their friends.

"Surely the dear Christ-child rejoiced as on Christmas last two hundred and seventy people, young and old, gathered here to celebrate His birth. Eager hands had helped decorate the house. The important men of the place came. Even the mayor was there, and his son, a bright lad, read a short essay, written by himself, on the meaning of the event. Better still, Uwo, the old fisherman, and his son, a bright lad too, were present, for there is no room for class distinctions here.

"One young man read a paper. It was significant: he was a Normal School student, and was of a religious turn of mind. Now religions are many, and he said he was going to 'have it out'; hence he took lodgings in a Buddhist temple with a priest, then went to the priest and to our evangelist and asked each openly for instruction, attending each on alternate days. Finally he began to pray. When men pray there is hope. There are four men praying there now hence we have hope. Well, this man prayed, and on this Christmas Eve he read a paper in favour of Christianity. Thus he read publicly, unasked, his soul's declaration of independence, the first heard here in all the ages. It was a bold, brave deed. 'Who follows in his train?'"

The two items mentioned, the essay and the paper, form of course a very small part of the program. A Sunday-school celebration in Japan is not something to be hurried over within a brief

Kindergarten at Mitonnosho, Innoshima

fleeting hour. It is the event of the year, long looked forward to and prepared for, and long to be remembered. No one will grudge devoting several hours to it, nor find the cushionless mats too hard, no matter how long the entertainment be continued.

The gifts distributed to the children on these occasions are very simple and inexpensive, consisting usually of gay coloured kites, battledores, or other Japanese toys, accompanied with small parcels of cake and oranges. To the older persons present tea and cake are commonly served, following Japanese custom, and to foster sociability. As the *Fukuin Maru* had sixty Christmas entertainments to provide for, and four thousand children, while her finances were in a chronic state of exhaustion, the gifts distributed must have been very cheap and simple indeed.

On another page of the Captain's log we are told of a Christmas celebration held in a Buddhist temple. Our old friend, Bo's'n Hirata, now skipper of the *Fukuin Maru No. 2,* and Colporter-at-large, began early in December to hold a series of children's meetings, which continued daily for seventeen days. "The village lent him a Buddhist temple for the purpose. An enthusiastic villager prepared and presented a sign-board, and hung it up outside the temple. It read, '*Fukuin Maru* Sunday School.' The children were divided into classes. Sunday-school bear stories and fish tales were barred out. They were taught the Beatitudes, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, 1 Corinthians 13, etc., etc., and also hymns. When Christmas came our villager trimmed the temple with red paper lanterns and invited the

whole village. The children sang hymns and recited Scripture, and all was followed by an earnest Gospel talk by the colporter-skipper of the *No. 2 Fukuin Maru,* in the very presence of the Buddhist images. At the close the village unanimously asked for another series of meetings at an early date."

To be present at these festive occasions sometimes cost our good Captain no end of toil and hardship, for winter is cold and stormy on the Inland Sea. In a tale of the sea, under the title "How We Got There," he has left us a very entertaining account of his adventures at a certain yuletide, when leaving his family cozily housed for the winter in the hospitable mission home at Himeji, he fought his way from island to island, drenched and frozen by the bitter December gales, that he might add something to the good cheer and helpfulness of the Christmas festival among the Island Folk. The story, however, is over long for our pages.

To God in highest Heaven
All glory be!
And on Earth peace
To men of His goodwill!
Such was the angels' song to shepherds given.
Nor doth its music cease.
Thou who didst chide and quell the angry sea,
On Galilee,
Speak Thou again, and let the warring world,
Its tumult stayed, its blood-stained banners furled,
At Thy rebuke be still!

XVI

THE HOME ON THE SHIP

Love stayed not
To glass her beauty in the flow of Phrat
Or bind her roses by the Hiddekel;
But came abroad to bless a world forlorn.
Where'er her footsteps fall new founts of life
Leap sparkling from t . desert. Fairest blooms,
Whose seed is waft from Eden, by her path
Lift up their shining faces,—Father-Heart
And Mother-Love, and Innocence-of-Babes,
And Lover's-Bliss, and Sister-Constancy.
She lights the hearths of all the happy earth,
And children's feet make music after her.
And hers are all the joys that hallow home.

THE toil and hardship which our good Skipper was willing to undergo in order to spend Christmas Day with his wife and bairns at Himeji, and his return after but a single day of domestic felicity to his strenuous work among the Islands, despite the bitter winter weather, are sufficient of themselves to attest both his love for his family, and his devotion to his work. During the rough, wild winter months, when the dangers and discomforts of navigation were more than he could permit wife and children to endure, the bright fireside at 47 Shimotera Machi,—or later, at 120 Goken Yashiki—in Himeji, became the Captain's lode-star. But save for a brief flying visit like that of Christmas Day, he

stood by his ship and by his Islanders, be it never so cold and stormy. For the rest of the year, however, the Captain usually had the great happiness of having his family with him.

Down in the bosom of the Little White Ship was a little white room. One reached it by climbing down the companionway to the 'tween-decks. On right and left, doors opened into tiny bedrooms, as a landlubber might call them, little white cabins, each with two little white berths, with immaculate white pillows and spreads. Each little cabin had a little round window, technically known as a port-hole, and openable only in fine weather, or when the sailors were not swabbing down the decks. The little white room—the cabin *par excellence*—depended for its illumination upon the skylight, and always seemed dim and shadowy to one coming down from the full light of the main deck. It boasted of no chairs, sofas or lounges, but on the starboard side stood a large plain table covered with a dark cloth, which served in turn as work-table, chart-table, and dining-table; as the altar for ship's worship and family worship and as board of palaver. Along the wall at one end and one side of this table ran a series of little covered chests or boxes, nautically termed lockers. These were crammed with all kinds of things—canned provisions, clothing, books and tracts, ship supplies and what not—and with their lids down and gay coloured covers, like boat cushions, laid over them, became the chairs and sofas of the little white room. A baby organ, if the writer's memory serves, a large lamp swinging from the wall, and some photographs, completed the fur-

nishing. This cabin, with the tiny white cabins opening off it, was what our Captain and his family called "Home." To be sure, there was also the beautiful white deck with its canvas awnings, so spotlessly clean one would not hesitate to eat off it, which became at need parlour, verandah, nursery, playground and place of public worship; and on this deck, a bit abaft the forecastle, was the kitchen, better known as the cook-house or the galley, diminutive to a degree, but a model of neatness and order. Here the ship's cook, with some assistance from the Lady of the Cabin, prepared wholesome and appetizing dishes, in Japanese style for the crew, and in American style for the Captain's family.

This quaint, dainty little dwelling constantly changed its latitude and longitude, and even its altitude, as it moved from one anchorage to another, and as the strong Inland Sea tides ebbed and flowed; but always about it were the blue waters and the green islands, and always across it blew the clean wholesome breath of the salt sea. On a fine spring morning when the sunshine kissed all the waves into silver; when the island slopes were red with wild azaleas, and the *uguisu* sang among the temple groves, who could ask a more delightful home? On the white deck, among the snug-coiled ropes, romped the children, coaxing into their games the indulgent sailors, as these went smiling about their several tasks; and in the little white room 'tween-decks the Lady of the Cabin was busy and happy with her housewifely tasks. But on dark stormy days and wild black nights, when the gale snored through the rigging, and the rain drove

in sheets across the decks, one could easily imagine a more desirable dwelling.

But be the weather what it pleased, the little white room in the bosom of the Little White Ship was the heart of a true home, a Christian home, a home of mutual confidence and love and helpfulness, and of happiness and peace. In it was duplicated the beautiful home life which the parents had known in their own childhood in Hamburg and Norwich. The children early yielded themselves to its wholesome Christian influences and took upon them the name of Christ. Such homes, especially such missionary homes, are nurseries of missionaries, and it is not surprising to hear that Philip may succeed his father in the captaincy of the Mission Ship, and that Evelyn has set her heart on returning to Japan to serve the Master in the line of Christian music.

Of the influence of this little floating home upon the Seven Sailors, upon the Shepherds of the Isles as they from time to time became its guests, and upon the Island Folk, swarming out in their gray unpainted boats to visit the vessel, mention is made elsewhere. We also of the mainland stations who enjoyed its open-handed hospitality brought away with us a blessing. That reverence and chivalry toward all women, that kindness and tenderness toward all children, which marked the Captain's life, gave their finest glow in his own home, and the Captain's Mate added the sunshine and fragrance of womanly gentleness and refinement, of a smiling face, of wifely and motherly devotion.

The good comradeship which existed between the Captain and his children, and his constant and

affectionate thought of them, even amid his engrossing and exhausting duties, are seen in the letters he made time to write them during the long separations his missionary life involved. On his birthday, September 24, 1916, he says, in a letter to his daughter in America:

"Mother has told you all the news, no doubt. That is the way Mothers do! Use up all the news and then 'rag' Dad for not writing long letters to the poor dear children, who are weeping out their eye-teeth because their cruel Father does not write! I was reminded the other day that I had not written to either of my children for at least 150 years by the clock, and that I ought to be ashamed to call myself a missionary, and should not expect to go to heaven. So you see I have turned good on my birthday, and there is still hope for me.

"I wish you could have been here last night, and we would have had you play a Wedding March. As it was, we had something between a clog-dance and a dirge on the bag-pipes. M—— was married and O—— played. Do you remember how you played for I——? I wish sometimes I could have you on the ship for a year just to show the people what real music is. Some of them would appreciate it now much more than they did when you were here."

At Christmas of the same year, his last Christmas on earth, he finds time amid the crowding demands of the Island Christmas campaign to send the season's greetings to the daughter over-seas:

"Merry, merry Christmas to you, and many of them! No doubt you will have a full day, and the fact that this is likely to be so is a real comfort to

our hearts. My! how I wish you were here to give us some music as a Christmas treat! If you come out to us for a year I shall plan to get a piano, have it taken to pieces and put in through the skylight and then put together again, so that you can give us plenty of music while you are here."

Missionaries, as a class, are the most optimistic and the best contented people in the world. They love the people for whom they labour. They have the happiest of homes. In spite of the long separations which are the one real trial of missionary life, they have comfort and joy in their children, whether about the family board or over-seas among strangers, committed to the keeping of God. The little white home in the heart of the Little White Ship was one of the happiest of the happy missionary homes of Japan, and therefore it had a message of hope and love and gladness for all the homes in the brown villages of the Inland Sea.

XVII

A NEW ERA

IN the years of grace 1899, 1900, it was a matter in much debate among persons with a relish for nice questions whether the vaunted nineteenth century was to be reckoned to the close of the former or of the latter year. The disputants on either side brought forward weighty arguments, each in favour of his own opinion. No personage of world-wide authority arising to decide the controversy the man in the street was left uncertain until New Year's Day 1901 whether he was in the new century or the old.

This question aroused little interest in the minds of the people of Japan, except among those superscholars who make a specialty of recondite problems of foreign extraction. To the Mikado's loyal subjects generally, '99 was the thirty-second year of Meiji, and '00 the thirty-third of the same. For them there was no new era until the Emperor Mutsuhito passed unto the Regions Beyond, and his son Yoshihito reigned in his stead. For while the educated classes are familiar with the western calendar and employ it on occasion, the common people, like the compilers of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel, and like others of the ancients, date only by the reigns of the monarchs.

But in one section of the Empire at least a new era began with the winter of '99–'00. For the Island Folk of the Inland Sea a new age dawned when the Little White Ship came sailing down their narrow waters. Already there are many who recognize this, and as time goes by, more and more will events be dated from the Coming of the Vessel, as the Romans counted their years from the Founding of the City. Reckoning in the Japanese style this is the twentieth year of the Era of the *Fukuin Maru*. One might say that for all that little Island world it is 20 A. D., for the coming of the vessel was to the Islanders verily the Coming of Christ.

"We have been out getting acquainted," said Captain Bickel, after completing his first round of the Islands. During that first memorable year he had not merely explored his appointed parish and familiarized himself with the moral and spiritual conditions which faced him, but had succeeded in introducing his Mission and his Message to myriads of the Island people. In nine out of ten of the hundreds of places at which he had knocked, his tact, courtesy and kindness had won admission, and had ensured a welcome and an open door in the future. As for the morose and withstanding tenth, patience and perseverance, prayer and pluck would finally conquer.

The way of the pioneer is the way of the cross. To become the Founder of a New Era for the Island Folk meant travail and pain of body and soul. Already, in the second year of the *Fukuin Maru*, the tremendous strain which the work entailed was beginning to tell seriously upon the Captain's health,

and for a part of the second summer the Little White Ship lay swinging idly at her anchor under the pine-fringed hills of Banshu, while her Skipper lay moored in the Sanatorium at Kobe, undergoing repairs, and chafing inwardly at this unexpected interruption of his plans. This proved to be but the first of several such serious interruptions, and the beginning of a long period of almost continuous weakness and suffering, a period which may be said, indeed, to have ended only with his death. The writer was deeply pained, during his third visit to the ship, in the summer of 1902, to find how greatly the Captain's remarkable bodily vigour had been sapped in his brief period of service. As they tramped some mountain path to a distant village, again and again a sudden faintness or spasm of pain would compel him to rest for a few moments by the wayside. But when the pain was a little assuaged, or the faintness had passed, he was on his feet again, to follow that mountain trail which was to him the path of duty. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Captain Bickel's remarkable story, and certainly the most touching feature thereof, was the sustained triumph of the ardour of his spirit over the weakness of his body. Believing that God had chosen him to bring the Gospel to the Islands, he brushed aside the oft-repeated medical advice to lay down the work, preferring rather to die at his task than to abandon it. "And with shaking body and clenched teeth he kept at it, the indomitable spirit driving the nerve-racked and suffering body to constant exertion, even when for months his sleep did not average two hours in the twenty-four." The multiplied labours to which his

conquering soul compelled his protesting body were more than enough for one in rude and ruddy health, and their performance by one who was practically an invalid borders on the miraculous. And not less wonderful was the patience, cheerfulness and self-forgetfulness which almost hid his suffering from others, even from those nearest to him in his home and in his work. The heroic element in the Captain's great Adventure does not lie so much in the courage with which he faced the dangers and hardships of the Inland Sea work and the suspicion and hostility of the Island people, as in the tenacity, the fortitude, the grit, the unflinching devotion with which in pain and weakness he continued to push forward his enterprise. Yes, the New Era came not without travail and sorrow. But we must return to our story.

So soon as he could persuade the doctors at the Sanatorium to release him, after his first breakdown, he was on board his ship again, westward bound. Everywhere he found reasons for encouragement.

"Said one Islander to another, 'Have you seen the Jesus ship lately?' 'No, but I hear she is laid up in a bay on the Banshu coast because the long foreign priest is ill.' Yes, and so it was then, but 'tis not so now, for the little white craft has spread her wings since then, and gone on her way toward the sunset where the islands lie close and many, to tell again to ever wondering hearts the story of a Saviour's all-embracing love. And so we give thanks as we hear the lap, lap of the water at her side. . . . Instead of finding the vessel and her message forgotten by the thousands in the islands now revisited, we rejoiced in a most cordial welcome

and a ready hearing. Many prejudices had been removed. Children who had fled from the foreigner before fled no more, while timid women who had stood aside whispering to one another that 'foreigners steal women and take them away,' came and told, with a happy laugh, of their own fears now gone. Doors once closed were opened now, and of all those opened before not one has as yet been closed upon us.

"It is fortunate for us that a Japanese house in its holding capacity is almost illimitable. Take the last island visited. Village after village gave us its most suitable house. Advertise to get a crowd? No need of that, the Jesus ship has come, and that is enough. Come and see. The house fills up inside, then packs. We take out the outside shutters and the yard fills up. 'Tis but the same old story: God, man, sin, love, Saviour. Which God? When? Where? Love, what has that to do with it all? Strange, strange story for ears and hearts that have lain dead so long. But how it holds them! Boy and girl, young man and maiden, man and woman in their prime, tottering old folk, they are all there listening and wondering. Oh, could we but give to those at home a glimpse of such a sea of faces as we see day by day it would be a missionary sermon setting aflame their hearts as long as life might last. But once learn to read those faces, and what a tale they tell! Some bear a sneer, some an incredulous smile, some, oh how many! are an incomprehending blank, the impress of generations of separation of man from God, when man lives that he may eat, sleep, and eat again and die. But the few, the few that have that look of deep longing to know more of this strange religion whose motive power is an incomprehensible love, what about them? They are few, but they are there, and if we but wait and work, and wait again and pray, the light will dawn upon their hearts, and they, poor long-lost wandering children, will return to their Father."

As the Captain's acquaintance with the people became more intimate, their gross superstition, profound spiritual ignorance and moral need lay ever more heavy upon his soul, and at the same time, with each circuit of the sun, new tokens of the power of the word of God were given to confirm his faith.

"'Where are the good folk all going to-day?' we asked by the roadside a few days since. 'To worship the Eye-god in the next village so that we may be free from eye-sickness.' 'To-day is the Hill-god's festival,' said a man in another place; 'if you cut down trees or work over there in the quarry, to-day, you will suffer all the year.' 'Is there a Sea-god?' 'Oh, yes, but his feast is along in the seventh month. You can tell when it is, because the water gets clear. He has a clean-up down below at that time.' Day after day, not once, but again and again, we meet these evidences of spiritual darkness, not to mention loathsome things of which one dare not speak, but which make the heart heavy.

"Here and there, in island after island, there are now to be found those who show a truly promising interest, an interest that seems to be in some cases the beginning of an earnest search after truth. If then we state that these signs have come long before the time of our thinking, that while truly, deeply, humbly grateful, we are still surprised, it is because we live amid this soul-depressing darkness. Not that it touches our heart to make it grow faint and falter. Nay, never! Not so long as the Master is near. But that the simple daily effort of such weak hands with such scant means, even though made in His name with much prayer, could be blessed to bring forth so soon from out of such a deadly dark night of indifference, superstition and ignorant fear, so rich a promise for the future, was too much for

our weak faith to grasp. But 'tis well so, for thus the glory will be all to God, and not to man."

The significance of the New Era in the Inland Sea is not to be found chiefly in statistics copied from the ship's log stating the numbers of those who have professed the Christian religion, or of the children gathered for Christian instruction, or of hearers attending the village meetings. "Behold, I make all things new." There is evident the working of a new life. There is a breath of spring in the air. A new light, that for them never was before on land or sea, has broken upon the Islands. In the hearts and on the faces of an ever increasing number of the people there is this new light and life, and it will glow and grow till it has transformed the little Island world. The tide, the dawn, and the growth of the Kingdom of God, these are three things which no man can stay.

During the sixty years since the Gospel began to be preached and lived in the Sunrise Kingdom, it has been creating a New Japan, in a very much deeper sense than could have come to pass through the mere impact upon the East of western secular learning and culture, a much more vital sense than is recognized by the average world-tourist. There has been coming into being a Japan with a new outlook on life, a new vision of God and the human soul. The sanctity of home and marriage, of motherhood and childhood; the value of the individual; business and social ethics, stand forth in a new light. Love, joy, peace, are new words to thousands who have tasted their meaning through an experience of the Gospel. Righteousness, truth,

altruism, forgiveness, compassion, humility,—the meaning and practice of these in the Christian sense is becoming part of the national life. As there are twice-born men, so are there twice-born nations. Japan's New Era, her Christian Era, began in 1859, with the coming of Christ to her shores in the persons of His apostles Williams and Brown, Hepburn and Verbeck and their companions. The Makers of New Japan are not so much the great statesmen who stood about the Throne in the days of the Restoration, nor the eminent journalists, scholars, jurists and men of affairs who appeared upon the scene as if by magic, although their influence has been great indeed in moulding the nation, as the quiet, patient, humble, and often despised missionaries and native Christian leaders, who have been the hands of God to lay the touch of the Gospel upon the people.

And what has taken place in the Empire on a large scale is being repeated among the Island Folk. It would be impossible for any one who has not been in intimate touch with the Inland Sea work to understand or imagine how very vital is the transformation that is in progress. One must despair of adequately describing it to a stranger. It would be like attempting to depict for one who had never witnessed a sunrise the beauty and charm of "the dawn spread upon the mountains." It is a miracle, a new creation, a vision of the glory of God.

To be the prophet and apostle of such an Era, the "Bringer of Morning" to the Inner and Outer Isles, was the high honour and privilege to which the grace of God elected Captain Bickel. He gave

himself, utterly, ungrudgingly, joyfully, to the Island Folk, in the most self-sacrificing service, and God has given them to him for an everlasting possession. Blessed are the Christian pioneers, the publishers of salvation, the "Bringers of Morning" to peoples who sit in darkness, for they have inherited the earth. The Pauls and Barnabases, the Columbas and Patricks, the Careys and Judsons, the Moffats and Livingstones, the Morrisons and Verbecks and Patons, the Grenfells and Bickels, such are the nation-builders, the heritors of the lands of the earth. Like Him who gave a New Era to all the earth, they shall see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied.

No grave holds Christ. 'Twas but an empty tomb
They found, who on that first glad Easter Morn
Came early to the sepulchre. Great Death,
Who thro' uncounted cycles had held sway
Unchecked, unquestioned, wide as earth is wide,
Lay smitten of a stroke incurable
Beside his shattered throne. O living Christ!
O Fountain and Lord of life! O Death of death!
We walk thro' death's dark valley safe with Thee.

XVIII

A NEW "FUKUIN MARU"

FOR thirteen years the little Mission Vessel which Shipwright Cook built so staunch and strong on the beach at Honmoku sailed among the clustered Islands which constituted her Skipper's parish. At the close of those thirteen years she was still strong and staunch, "from truck to keelson and from keelshoe to shear strake," fit to weather many a rude gale. For her Captain's sake, and for her work's sake, she was loved in hundreds of Island villages, and her name had become a household word in ten thousand homes beyond the wide sea. To many an one among the Island Folk she had brought a new hope and a new life, or at least a human love and sympathy before undreamed of, and a glimpse of the Divine Heart from which all love and sympathy flow.

But the very success of the work for which she stood made it imperative to replace her with a larger and speedier vessel. The disability under which she had laboured from having been built simply as a sailing craft had, as we have seen, been partly removed by the addition of the motor launch, and still further overcome by the fitting in of the auxiliary engines; but even with this equipment she could not overtake the rapidly growing work.

Captain Bickel's first thought was to lengthen the ship and fit her with larger engines.

In April, 1911, Captain Bickel, with his family, sailed for America on a six months' furlough. The Captain's furloughs were always busy times, and when he returned to the field in the autumn it was with his plans matured not for the extension of the old vessel indeed, but for the building of her successor, this after consultation with the Home Board having been decided upon as the wiser course, and the generosity of friends of the work at home having made it possible. Already, before the year was out, the materials for the new ship had been bought and preparations were making for laying her keel, and in the spring of 1913 she was ready for launching.

She was built by Japanese wrights at the Furuye Dock, a shipyard on Upper Osaki Island. Captain Bickel was his own contractor and overseer. If to build a mission residence or mission school in Japan is to run a grave risk of nervous prostration, as is frequently remarked, how unthinkable a task is the construction of a ship, where everything must be fitted and joined with microscopic exactness! But the Captain, as usual, achieved the impossible; and in June of 1913 the new *Fukuin Maru* was afloat, a lively craft, with the vigour of youth in her bones, and with ability to take the initiative, and successfully launched herself one fine day, when no one was expecting it, pretty nearly taking some of the ship-carpenters prematurely down to Davy Jones' locker.

The new *Fukuin Maru* is about twice the size of the earlier vessel. She is of brigantine rig, length

over all 122 feet, on the water-line 103 feet, beam 24. Her carrying capacity is 164 tons, and with engines of 120 horse power, burning oil, she has a speed of nine knots an hour. Her lines were designed by Mr. Arthur Binney, of Boston, successor to the well-known marine architect, Burgess, of the same city. Between decks there is the much needed assembly room, to accommodate from 50 to 100 persons, and the additional cabin room for evangelists.

The new vessel was as close a pattern of the old *Fukuin Maru* as was possible with her larger tonnage and different rig. There were the same graceful lines of the white hull, the same airy lift to the spars, and she gave one that same impression of simplicity, order, purity and dainty beauty which had been the charm of the earlier vessel. As she came sailing down the wind it was easy to imagine that she was the same dear old Mission Ship which the Islanders had learned to love, only transformed somehow into a bigger and speedier vessel; and the loyalty to the older ship was transferred spontaneously to her successor. She carried on the name and tradition of The Little White Ship without so much as a jolt to the Islanders' hearts.

The dedicatory services were held on June 2nd, at Setoda. As narrated in an earlier chapter, Setoda had been, a few years before, stubbornly, bitterly opposed to the *Fukuin Maru* work. Now that work had there many of its stoutest adherents and warmest friends, and the town had become the centre of the Christian activity of the Inland Sea. Here Mr. Ito, the pastor of the *Fukuin Maru*

Church, the leader of the Shepherds of the Isles, made his home. The new vessel's maiden voyage was from the place of her nativity to the place of her dedication.

"DZA-NBI—'Congratulation on your first voyage.' So read the two, three flag hoists of the International Code over Kone Island lighthouse as we passed. A little farther along the lone believer on the north side of Omi Island was out on the hillside frantically waving a flag tied to a long pole. What wonder that, as the boys say, we felt 'sort of queer inside,' for were there not thirteen years of toil night and day and a subtly growing influence in thousands of homes behind the waving of that flag?

"The new ship was afloat at last. The long process of building under adverse conditions was at an end. The party which had so confidently prophesied the complete failure of the Christian movement in the Islands had 'lost face.' The other side, the believers, the enquirers and sympathizers held up their heads in grateful pride, for they knew that this new ship meant new life and much of it to the cause they loved.

"The Dedication Service was held. In spite of the adverse season and equally adverse day, the deck was crowded with such a representative body of people as we of the Little White Ship delight to see. Those elements which we have planned and worked and prayed to bring together in the name of an all-embracing Saviour's love during these years were there. Rich and poor, ill-clad and well, educated and uneducated, folk of all walks of life, they were all there.

"Efficiency! Yes, the vessel means greater efficiency, but not only that, for efficiency sometimes, yea, too often, has no heart-throb. The new vessel means new hope, new courage in hundreds of weary hearts; sympathy,

consolation to hundreds who are ill and sad; timely warning to hundreds on the verge of falling, and a new awakening of hundreds more to a life of hope and joy hitherto unknown.

"Through thirteen years of strenuous effort, Christianity in these Islands was being tested in the eyes of the people. The new ship means just this, that it has stood the test and has become a recognized institution in the Islands. The two hundred and more letters of congratulation sent to the Dedication Service from high and low, five being from Governors of Provinces; the forty-five telegrams; the messages since received: 'Come to our town and *our* town and *our* town—first,'—all mean this.

"So we give thanks from deeply moved hearts for this much needed equipment and go forth to face with courage the crowds, the thousands, the tens of thousands whom we see already coming to meet us with a new attitude."

Yes, we looked forward confidently to many years of ever widening influence and ever growing success for our dear Captain and the beautiful white ship, dedicated that June morning to the glory of God and the uplifting of the Island people. But His ways are not our ways. Yet, in the divine goodness, the Captain was to see happy days not a few on his new vessel.

Immediately on the conclusion of the dedicatory services, anchor was weighed for a ten months' cruise through the whole Inland Sea field, a cruise which covered thirty-five hundred miles actual sailing. Having thus traversed the Inland Sea to its westernmost limit, the new *Fukuin Maru* then nosed her way out through the shipping in the

Baptismal Service on the seashore at Setoda, Ikuchi Shima

Straits of Shimonoseki and the course was laid southwest for the first of the open sea island groups which the Captain had so long carried in his heart. Having been a blue water sailor in the old seafaring days it was with a keen delight that he felt the throb of the Pacific under his vessel's keel. The mighty, untamed ocean,

"The deep, unsearched, unmeted main,"

seemed to him more distinctly a part of God's outdoors than the Inland Sea, with its restricted outlook and softer beauty. He rejoiced, too, in the rugged grandeur of the deep sea islands which presently loomed up across the waves, and in the robust, manly character of the people whom he found dwelling on their wild shores.

"Of special interest have been the visits of the vessel to the Iki, Hirado and Goto groups of islands lying outside the Inland Sea to the westward of the coast of Kyushu. The welcome received, the general interest shown in our message, the promise beyond all promises hitherto in other islands of definite results, fully repay the serious anxiety and often dangerous work of finding a way into the many rock-bound, shoal-strewn, chartless harbours without a pilot. The rugged disposition of the people which seems to reflect the rugged nature of those rock-ribbed outposts of the Japan coast gives promise of a high type of Christian character, when once the slow process of leading out and up from a life of superstition and soul-destroying custom to the free and sunlit highlands of God's love shall have been accomplished."

While the Deep Sea Isles thus welcomed the strange vessel and her foreign Captain with a frank hospitality, everywhere among the islands

of the four older districts, within the *Seto-Nai-Kai,* where the first *Fukuin Maru* had become such a familiar sight, her successor was received with acclaim; and everywhere the Captain noted with thankful heart what a different Island world was this which greeted the new vessel from that through which, only fourteen years before, the former boat had made her Voyage of Discovery. This maiden cruise of the new ship was, rather, a triumphal progress.

"We sailed in the old *Fukuin Maru,* with the purpose of creating in every community touched by the ship a public recognition of and standing for Christianity. We sought for Christianity public acknowledgment of its right to be there. Religious liberty as an official announcement is a fine thing. We thank God for it. Practical religious liberty in a community of centuries-old hide-bound clan conditions is a thing to be fought for. We have fought. The process was slow.

"We sailed in the new ship to find the original purpose of the old vessel largely fulfilled. 'Christianity in the Islands has advanced twenty years in ten,' some one has said. This is no play of words. The new ship found the foundations for a wide work laid in many places, but it took the coming of the new ship to reveal this. Hence we of the Little White Ship returned after a ten and a half months' cruise, covering thirty-five hundred miles of most intricate channels, with hearts full of gratitude to God, and to those whose generosity made the new ship possible. So great indeed were the evidences of God's mercy and guidance during these months that one worker broke out in a workers' meeting with, 'It is the Acts of the Apostles over again; let us thank God!'

"But what are the proofs of the great change? They

are many. Some can be known only by personal contact. Others, which we may mention, are: The wide and open welcome and recognition given to the coming of the new ship in a hundred places, especially by the so-called upper or influential class to whom we had resolutely refused to pay court or give undue attention during all these years; the welcome accorded in many places by the local press; the respect shown by the general public to isolated believers; the ability of the believers to do active work, every one in his or her own surroundings, owing to the new attitude of the people; also, the large number of earnest enquirers rallying around us during the year, there being several hundred of all classes, both men and women, spread almost evenly over the whole wide field. These conditions have been forcibly brought to light during the first cruise of the new vessel, and for all these things we give thanks."

Not only did the coming of the new mission craft serve to crystallize into public expression the cordial interest in the Mission and Message of the foreign captain which had been gradually making a place in the hearts of the people, it also gave an immense stimulus to the whole Island work. Referring to this Captain Bickel continues:

"There are, however, more immediate results apparent from the going forth of the new ship. The more rapid movements of the vessel make it possible to keep in close touch with the work and workers in the several sections. New life, power and courage are brought to workers and lonely believers by the more frequent large public meetings on board or ashore during the ship's visits to the various Island groups. The plan of having a special room on board for the pastor-general and his

wife has resulted in a new sense of church responsibility throughout the widespread Island church organization, and a sense of mutual nearness and unity of purpose has entered the hearts of the widely scattered believers as never before. Also, the meetings for believers and enquirers, the communion services for little groups of church members, the social gatherings for Christians, the meetings for consultation on methods of work with small companies of Christians, made possible by the rapid and systematic movements of the new vessel, have resulted in an almost startling desire on the part of the isolated believers to work for others. These efforts for Christians being interwoven with the larger public meetings reaching tens of thousands of people of all classes have given the believers a happy opportunity to help, and to test their powers. Indeed, the work of the Christians alone would fill a volume and would deeply touch the reader's heart. All these things have resulted in a closer voluntary organization of small groups of believers locally for worship, consultation and work, thus giving a healthy church life in many places. This promises the development of a number of local churches in the not distant future, as opposed to the one general church organization now obtaining, and which at best is a temporary expedient."

The varied experiences, nautical and otherwise, of a ten months' thirty-five hundred miles' cruise, were a good test of the seaworthy qualities of the new ship and of her adaptedness to the work for which she was planned. She stood the test well, and the Skipper returned from his cruise delighted with her. As a master shipwright he had evidently made good.

"The vessel itself, both as a vessel and as a mission

plant, goes far beyond all our expectations. Easy to handle, developing a speed of ten miles an hour under power, good under sail, good in a sea way, neat in appearance, propelled at the same cost per mile as the old vessel which had but half the tonnage, yet with double the speed, having ample deck room for the many meetings held on board, an assembly room for smaller meetings, a pastor's room, an evangelist's room,—she is indeed a floating mission station, with a missionary home included, taken systematically from village to village, from town to town. Again and again, in place after place, as the hundreds have come and the hundreds have gone until they have become thousands upon thousands, the workers have exclaimed, 'Thank God for this efficient plant!'

"A new Ship! no! new life, new power, it is that has come to the Islands during the past year.

"'But it is after all only a ship,—keel, keelson, frames, beams, planks, bolts, rigging from main boom jumper to Dolphine striker!' Yes, so think those who do not know. Those who do know say that for one and a half million people spread over many islands, and untouched by any other agency, the ship is not a ship, but an institution, a movement, a vital force expressing itself in many ways and resulting in what one man called a spiritual revolution. The vessel is to those one and a half million souls not merely the representative of Christianity, but Christianity itself. As those who sail in her speak, teach, act and live; as her representatives in the various islands, workers and Christians, live and speak; so the tide of Christianity in these Islands ebbs and flows."

If we may think of the dedication of the first *Fukuin Maru* as marking the beginning of a New Era for the Island world, the dedication of the second *Fukuin Maru* may be taken as setting the

date of a new period in that Era. But many in the homeland who through their interest in the Mission to the Islanders learned to love the first little vessel may wish to know her subsequent history. Well, the little ship herself, the visible, tangible construction of wood and copper, rope and canvas, still doubtless rated high at Lloyds as a good ship and trim, but with some name less sweet than that by which we knew her, sails among the islands of the mid-Pacific, the property of a trader to the Southern Main. But that impalpable spirit which dwelt in her as the *Fukuin Maru,* the Ship of Glad Tidings, has departed from her, and has entered into the newer vessel—an instance of the transmigration of souls.

The mists had come up heavy and cold, one August evening, over the little priest-village at the summit of the Usui Pass, above Karuizawa, and the east wind was moaning through the tops of the sacred trees, of immemorial age, which stand about the temple enclosure. In the deep shadows under their dripping boughs stood the good people of the village, gathered as for some festival. Against the rear wall of the temple court might be dimly seen two shrines standing side by side. One of these was in an advanced state of dilapidation, weather-worn and weather-stained. The wild mountain storms of many years had beaten upon it. The other was fresh from the hands of the builders; and how dainty and simple and clean a new Shinto shrine can be one must visit Japan to understand. Before these two shrines knelt two lines of priests, the village-fathers, in all the bizarre finery of Shinto ceremonial robes. Priests and people were

there to hold a Dedication Service, as we should say, or rather an Installation Service. It was the "Festival of Shifting the Spirit," a sort of spiritual house-moving which occurs whenever an old shrine has to be repaired or replaced. Torches flared. Drums beat. There were weird strains of primitive music. The priests presented their offerings according to the ancient Shinto ritual. At the proper psychological moment the Spirit dwelling in the old shrine was entreated and encouraged by soft hissing sounds from the lips of the worshippers, and by the waving of the sacred *gohei* wands, to graciously deign to vacate the mouldering, storm-racked shrine which had so long been his local habitation, and to take up his august abode in the new and finer quarters provided for him by Shinto piety. Thenceforth the old shrine was simply an empty shell.

In the case of the two *Fukuin Maru* there was held no "Festival of Shifting the Spirit," unless one may think of the Dedication Service of the new vessel as such; but in some mysterious way the soul, the life, the impalpable essential Spirit of the first Mission Vessel has departed from her and now dwells in her successor. When the new Little White Ship comes speeding down the Island channels, "sailing across the shadows of many shrines and temples, to carry light to those who sit in darkness," it is just the old Little White Ship in a different dress, as every one of the simple-hearted Island villagers understands perfectly well.

XIX

THE SHADOW OF WAR

THE Karuizawa season was at its height. In rustic summer cottages nestling at the foot of Atago and Hanare, dotting the slopes of Kamagazawa, and scattered out over the flowery green prairie on the edge of which the ancient village is set, were domiciled a thousand foreigners, chiefly Britishers and Americans but with here and there a family whose household talk was in German, French, or some other of the languages of continental Europe. A part of this summer population was composed of business and professional men from the port cities; but the great majority were missionaries and their families, fled to this breezy mountain resort from the deadly heat of the Cities of the Plain, and from sultry regions of Korea, China and the Philippines; for Karuizawa, high up on the central mountain mass of mid-Japan, under the shadow of big, bluff, broad-shouldered, choleric old Asama, is the missionary Mecca of east Asia.

Life is strenuous at Karuizawa, except to some dear wise old fathers and mothers in Israel who are content to rest and dream and pray, and refresh their souls with the beauty of God's outdoors. For the rest of us, the vacation weeks fly so swiftly, and we have planned to crowd so much into them,

that we must play hard and work hard and make the most of every precious day. So the tennis courts and baseball field were alive with players; excursion parties, lunch baskets on arm, were climbing the green slopes of Fujimi, or winding down the romantic glens that lead to Yokogawa; and in the pine woods of Kosè, on the windy tops of Sunset Point and Prospect Peak, sat little groups of picnickers, light-hearted as the birds.

The dingy village street had been transformed into one continuous bazaar, where the alluring shops of silk merchants and curio dealers, who had flocked here from distant cities, stood cheek by jowl with the stalls of the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker,

> "And with buyers and with sellers
> Was humming like a hive."

Missionary families from lonely interior stations were doing their Christmas shopping, and thrifty housewives were buying their next day's supply of meat and vegetables.

In the big, plain, unpainted and ungarnished auditorium, the centre of the intellectual and religious life of the community, something was going on. There was always something going on at the Auditorium,—sunrise prayer meetings, forenoon lectures, afternoon Bible studies; mission conferences, student volunteer conventions; annual meetings of kindergartners, rescue-workers; of temperance, anti-tuberculosis and Sabbath-observance societies, and of a whole list of other worthy organizations. Yes, life was bright and wholesome and busy up on that green roof of the world.

And then, sudden and startling as an eruption of Asama, came the news of the outbreak of the War. The bulletin-board at Social Corner became the centre of attraction. Britishers read with exultation, and Americans with admiring sympathy, that good old England would stand by her pledges to Belgium and her friendship with France, to her last man and her last shilling. Then Japan herself, Britain's Asiatic ally, stepped down into the arena, unconscious, as the sole surviving empire of Asia, that she was to help "make the world safe for democracy."

The shadow of the war cloud fell across all the brightness of the summer, like the shadow of Hanare across the plain when the sun declines. Experts in apocalyptic prophecy found in Daniel and the Revelation express intimations of the imminent end of the age. Sons of British missionaries and business men, more modern-minded, began to volunteer for service, each homeward-bound steamer carrying little groups of ardent patriots. But the iron had not yet entered our souls. The Valley of Jehoshaphat into which God was gathering the nations for judgment was far away. After all, it was but the penumbra of the world catastrophe into which our summer community had entered. The tennis courts still rang with shouts and laughter, albeit not quite so blithe as before, and the village street kept up its roaring trade. Over in the Auditorium we took it more seriously, and many were the prayers to the Lord of Hosts for His guidance and mercy upon the nations.

It was a grave question, too, and a matter for much prayer, how the missionary cause in Japan

and other non-Christian lands would be affected by the spectacle of the so-called Christian nations of the West drawn up against each other in bloody conflict. Would not the Holy Name whereby we are called be blasphemed among the heathen? Happily, in the goodness of God, our fears were not realized, at least so far as Japan is concerned. Here and there was raised the voice of some zealous Buddhist, or some truculent atheist, claiming that Christianity had proved itself a failure, and would presently vanish from the earth; but these voices found no echo in the hearts of the multitude. To the unthinking it was enough that their revered Emperor had entered the lists on the side of the Allies, and that the soldier's calling had always been in high honour in Japan; while the thoughtful had wisdom to "distinguish things that differ" and to discern between Christianity as a vital force in the lives of sincere believers and as a mere veneer on a so-called Christian civilization. Indeed, the War robbed the opponents of Christianity of one of their favourite charges, to wit, that the genius of the religion of Christ is incompatible with patriotism and a military spirit, and would prove subversive of Japanese nationalism and loyalty. At all events the Christian propaganda suffered no sensible check. The great nation-wide three years' evangelistic campaign, which was now in its second year, went forward with unabated enthusiasm and success, and never had the hearts of the people seemed more responsive to the Message of the Cross.

What was true of the mainland was not less true of the Islands. A war between nominally Chris-

tian nations was no stumbling-block to the Island Folk. The war hit the Inland Sea Mission hard, nevertheless. The new *Fukuin Maru,* dedicated in June, 1913, had proved efficient beyond her Captain's most sanguine expectations. During her cruise of thirty-five hundred miles among the Islands of the Inner and Outer Seas she had everywhere been accorded a welcome beyond what had been hoped for, and the summer of 1914 found the whole Island field in a most encouraging condition, and the Captain full of plans for the more intensive work and the more extensive work which the efficiency of the new vessel made possible. And then came the War. It is a far cry from the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin to the blue lanes of the Inland Sea, but when Emperor William drew his sword from its scabbard and held it aloft as a challenge to the nations, its shadow fell even athwart these lonely islands.

The Russo-Japanese war, for some reason, had not interfered with the activities of the Mission Ship, but this great world conflict was fraught with more insidious dangers and called for stricter precautions. The Japanese Government felt obliged, as a measure of safety, to cancel all permits for boats flying foreign flags, whether the pleasure yachts of the foreigners in the port cities, or the larger craft built for more serious purposes, to call at any place in the Inland Sea or on the coast of Japan other than the open ports. This of course tied up the *Fukuin Maru,* for the authorities, however kindly disposed to her Captain and her flag, hardly felt at liberty to make an exception in her favour. So when the Mission Vessel came gaily

sailing back from the far-off Gotos, in November, 1914, at the end of an adventurous and prosperous cruise, it was to be met by a government order to tie up until further notice.

The Captain might have avoided the difficulty by hauling down "Old Glory" and running up the Japanese flag in its place, for the ship has a Japanese as well as an American registry, and the Captain had passed the Japanese naval court examinations. The authorities, however, dissuaded him from taking this course, representing to him that as an American vessel under the American flag she was a distinct factor in the promotion of good-will between Japan and the United States, and thereby encouraging him to hope that the interdict on the vessel's movements would be lifted at the earliest possible moment.

So the Gospel Ship was steered into the snug sheltered haven of Miya-no-Ura, a short run from the mission headquarters at Setoda, and there moored in the shadow of the pine-clad bluffs. The Christmas season came, and great was the disappointment of the thirty-five hundred Sunday-school children, and of many children of larger growth, when the beautiful American ship and her much loved Captain, with all the lanterns and flags, pictures and gifts which were to be part of the Christmas cheer, failed to come to them. The winter passed, and the summer, and Christmas came again, and yet no glimpse of the *Fukuin Maru*, which lay gathering barnacles in her snug retreat in Miya-no-Ura.

Her Captain, however, gathered no barnacles, but made this period of enforced waiting one of

the most profitable in the history of the mission. Some sentences from his reports for the year show how well the time was improved:

"The hit of hits has been the detention of the ship by the authorities as a direct war measure; not the detention of the *Fukuin Maru* as a mission ship, but the detention of all vessels on the coast flying any and every foreign flag, as a precautionary measure at a time when, as one official said, 'The whole world is on fire and mad with war.' The delay in the direct prosecution of the work in the Islands has been a sore trial, yet there is coming to us a dawning light as to the place it may have in God's plan, which we are sure is perfect.'

"To be held up is not pleasant. To stop to think is sometimes wholesome. The *Fukuin Maru* has had to stop owing to the war, but we are as busy as ever, only in a different way. The temporary suspension of direct activities with and from the ship is a dire disappointment. There are, however, compensations. It has forced us to stop and think. As we have thought we have seen. As we have seen we have thanked God. As we have thanked Him we have gone vigorously to work to make new plans and prepare new material for a fresh and more intelligent attack when the ship is once more free.

"Special time has been found to plan for and help to carry into being a stronger, clearer church life, and expression of that life in methods of church organization and church work in the Islands. The results have been gratifying. Again, we have had time for an examination and study of conditions of Island life, or rather for an assimilation of the impressions and facts received from contact with many thousands of Island homes, and many tens of thousands of Island people, and bringing these results to bear on the problems

likely to confront the young Island church in the near future.

"This hindrance has given time for things long planned for. Among these were the systematizing, rewriting, and reissuing of Sunday-school lesson helps; the developing of plans for conserving the results of sixty-two Sunday schools by forming a society along Christian Endeavour lines, and the inaugurating of a self-supporting industrial work to stem some of the tide of young girls setting toward the cities of the mainland and ruin.

"The drift of young girls to the cities of the mainland and consequent ruin has lain on our hearts for years. At last we have thrown prudence to the winds and attempted something for these girls. Yes, we have started industrial work, not to catch people,—we don't have to,—but to save them from parents and relatives after they are under our influence. But our great purpose is to make a public protest against existing social and industrial conditions, and give an example of better things. We have begun without a cent of capital, hoping to make the work self-supporting. Battenburg lace and drawn work, directly undertaken with the girls under our immediate care, some in a dormitory, some in their parents' homes, is one feature. Another, towel making, through five already existing small local plants, gives employment to, say, sixty girls under Christian influence.

"Leakage is a serious thing, be it in a ship or in a church. In the Island church organization, in spite of a membership distributed in sixty-seven places, there is no leakage. Every member is in touch with the church and the church with him or her. This happy condition has resulted in a strong desire to conserve results all around,—the results of the sixty-two Sunday schools, of the general evangelism, of the newspaper and literature work, of the industrial work, and of the long

enquirers' list of several hundred names. To this end a society has been formed along Christian Endeavour lines, called the Light Seeking Society, which is affiliated with the National Christian Endeavour Society, the National Temperance Society, etc., etc. The Christians will plan their efforts, especially for young people, through this society. Scholars of long standing who are leaving the Sunday school to go out into life are recommended by the ship's workers to this society as associate members. Special meetings are held by the Christians for these groups of young people and also for enquirers."

Captain Bickel's personal liberty was not interfered with. He was plainly told that he might go wherever he pleased, but with the Inland Sea waters charted in his head and with his intimate acquaintance with its fortified zones, and having enjoyed the unfailing confidence of the authorities, he thought best to avoid everything that might cause the government suspicion or annoyance, and declined to accept this privilege. He therefore remained on his ship except when important mission business called him to Tokyo, and then punctiliously reported his movements to the proper authorities.

On these journeys he was amused, possibly sometimes gently annoyed, to find himself under strict surveillance, in spite of the confidence expressed in him by the higher authorities. His German name, the fact that his home was in Germany, and that he had been in regular communication with persons in that country, naturally aroused suspicion in the minds of overzealous spy-hunters. After all, was not this inexplicable Inland Sea

Mission—*Fukuin Maru,* American flag and all—merely a blind, a camouflage? In other parts of the world German officers had posed as missionaries, as in the well authenticated case of a certain member of a Mission from the Fatherland, carrying on evangelistic work in Asiatic Turkey, who when the War broke out "proved to be a German captain of artillery, and he it was who trained the guns upon the American mission, destroying the property where countless times he had been entertained as guest." But our Captain Bickel, in spite of his German name and German ancestry, was an American and a democrat of the second generation, and like all true Americans, and all true democrats of every nation, not to say all true Christians, hated war to the marrow of his bones. He could not even bear to see a military toy in the hands of his children. To hear of his being shadowed as a possible German spy, a political enemy of Great Japan, was something to add to the gaiety of missionaries!

Meanwhile, the Little White Ship continued to accumulate seaweed and barnacles at Miya-no-Ura, and her friends in four hundred and fifty villages looked in vain up the blue lanes for the gleam of her sails. There were so many who needed her and her Captain, needed the comfort and the counsel he would bring! They had been saving up their sorrows and their problems against his coming. Doubtless there were many among the Islanders who added their prayers to the Captain's for the ship's speedy release.

The Captain added effort to his prayer, and in April, 1916, had the great joy of seeing his little ship at sea again with unforeseen blessings in her

wake. "The negotiations resulting in the release of the ship after one year and four months of detention, though demanding tact and patience, resulted also in much that will, we believe, prove beneficial to the interests of Christian work in the islands not only, but to Christian efforts everywhere. The interest aroused in the Japanese Federation of Churches, and among Japanese Christian leaders, as to the question of our release, is one asset. The direct thought given by high officials to Christian activities for the uplift of the people in a large section of this land, as represented by the *Fukuin Maru,* is another, and must lead to a better understanding of Christian motives."

So, while the Great War went on, and the war cloud grew ever blacker above the nations, its shadow lifted from the Little White Ship, messenger of the Gospel of Peace. Save only the Kurahashi District, which was of strategic naval importance, she had the freedom again of all the Island world. As she sped forth afresh on her mission of mercy the Captain walked her bridge glad and thankful to be once more, in this active way, about the business of the Kingdom. Never had the vessel received so warm a welcome as now awaited her, and never had the condition of the work in the wide Island parish been so satisfactory and promising. On the farther side of the world rose the clamour of war and the bitter music of Hymns of Hate, but to the Island villagers there spake again the still small voice of the message of love and peace which by and by, please God, shall cause wars to cease unto the end of the earth.

XX

SOME ISLAND STORIES

DURING the nearly a score of years Captain Bickel sailed his Little White Ship among the Inner and Outer Islands, there have occurred in connection with the work of the vessel many incidents worthy of permanent record. Some of these are narrated in the Captain's annual or occasional reports, but a larger number were stored in his memory, to enliven his conversation as one sat with him over the rudder, on the main-rail, or paced with him the spotless deck of the Gospel Yacht. Some of these incidents are amusing, many are pathetic. Some set forth the perversity of man, some the goodness of God, some the marvellous sufficiency of the Gospel to meet the needs of all classes and conditions of human beings. Told in the Captain's inimitable way, surely never were sailors' yarns more interesting than these little true tales of the Sea and the Islands. A few of these incidents, told where possible in the Captain's own words, are gathered into this and the following chapter. They may at least serve to make our log of the *Fukuin Maru* more of a "human document."

"Old Pilgrim's Progress"

In the city of Osaka, a few years ago, lived an

old rickshaw puller, Ode by name, who had drifted up there from his native island in the Inland Sea, on the quest for rice, no doubt. Some of the many thousands of rickshaw men are of good family and education, with refined features and manners, brought to this menial occupation by misfortune or dissipation. Ode, however, was just a plain rough uneducated coolie. When sixty-seven years of age he came under the influence of the Gospel, was converted, and at once gave himself, such as he was, to the service of his newly found Lord and Saviour. Then he remembered his heathen neighbours on the island where he had been born. "They have never heard of Jesus," he said in his heart. "I will go down and tell them how He has saved me." So he sewed a Red Cross on his hat as a symbol of his new faith, and started for his old island home.

Meanwhile the Mission Ship had begun to cruise in the Inland Sea, and Captain Bickel had obtained a footing on a number of the Islands. On one of these, especially, the leading people, such as the mayor of the principal town, the superintendent of police, and other persons of position, had shown themselves very friendly, and had even aided the ship's workers to secure a very desirable building for their meetings. But the work there, so far, had borne no spiritual fruit. There were no conversions.

One day, when the vessel lay off the island, the Captain came ashore and paid a visit to one of the officials at his home.

"He was a self-complacent, self-satisfied individual, very glad to meet the interesting foreigner and enjoy

his friendship, but with not the slightest idea of becoming a Christian. He stood at the door and laughingly welcomed the Captain with the words: 'What do I hear, opposition in the town?' 'How so?' asked the Captain. 'Oh, an old fellow has come in here and says he is going to start a church!' answered his genial friend, laughing again. 'Well,' said the Captain seriously, 'if he is a Christian, he is my brother and I must go to see him.' 'Oh, no,' was the reply, 'quite unnecessary; he doesn't amount to anything; just an ignorant old rickshaw coolie from Osaka, named Ode. You needn't pay the slightest attention to him.' 'Well,' reiterated the Captain, 'if he is a Christian he is my brother, and I must go and see him.' And taking Pastor Ito he went.

"In a back street, in a mean little house, he found Ode. Sure enough, he was only an ignorant rickshaw coolie, but he had now returned to found the Church of Christ on his native island. He was obsessed with this purpose. He could not write, and could read only the simplest characters with the greatest difficulty, and yet he had a Bible which he was slowly spelling out. His speech was thick and indistinct, so that he could hardly be understood; in fact, he seemed to have no attractive qualities.

"Ode was very much disappointed to hear that Captain Bickel had reached the town before him, and Captain Bickel was surely disappointed to find Ode the first representative of Christianity in this town. But after consultation, both the Captain and Pastor Ito determined that they must recognize Ode as a Christian, for he seemed by his conversation to be a thoroughly converted man; and furthermore they felt that they must leave him at least to begin his work in this town, his native place, although they were sure that all these high class friends of theirs would be offended, and that the work in this particular place would be set back four or five years by this strange incident or accident.

"About three months after this the Captain received a postal card scrawled in the rudest characters. All it said was 'Come, preach. Ode.' With great misgivings the Captain and Pastor Ito went. They found the avenue leading up to the church lined with people of all sorts, from the richest to the poorest, while an audience of four hundred overflowed the building. 'Where did they come from, Ode San?' asked the Captain. 'Don't know,' mumbled the old man. 'What are they here for?' 'To hear you preach.' 'How did you get them here?' 'Don't know,' said the incomprehensible Ode. So the Captain preached.

"Dining with his old friends he found out how Ode had done it. (Ode never told.) Very humbly Ode had gone to the head-teacher's door with a New Testament which he had bought out of his slender means. As it seemed to him befitting, he had come to the back door, and, although the servants tried to drive the poor old man away, he insisted in his meek, deprecatory manner on seeing the teacher. When the teacher appeared, Ode asked if he might give him the New Testament. 'Why should I want it?' asked the teacher. 'It makes the heart good,' said Ode. 'But I am good enough now,' was the reply. 'Go over there,' he said, pointing to the slum district; 'the hearts of those people are bad; give them your book;' and he made a gesture of dismissal. The old man looked at him earnestly and said solemnly, 'Teacher, you are making an awful mistake; even if you will not see Christ in the book, you may see Him in me.' This very remarkable and very humbly spoken protest and appeal greatly impressed the teacher, and he took the book and read it.

"Again, Ode heard that a fellow-townsman was sick and called at the house. The wife came to the back door to see the old man. He said, 'I have come to help. I hear your husband is sick.' 'But you don't know my husband,' said the astonished woman, 'and you are no

"Old Pilgrim's Progress"

relative of ours. Why do you wish to help?' 'Your husband is my brother,' replied Ode. Thinking him a harmless old crank, she said, 'Well, what can you do? You can't nurse a sick person.' 'Oh, no,' said Ode, 'I can't do that, but I can do anything else—chop the wood, bring the water.' She let him do it, as it seemed to please him so much, all the time her husband was sick. Thus he sought out every sick 'brother' in the city and helped with wood and water, and preached very simply to everybody he met. By and by he got the idea of having a preaching service and sent Captain Bickel the postal card, and that was all there was to it.

"From that time to this (1916) this poor old man has preached unceasingly. On three islands of 22,000, 8,000 and 20,000 he has preached the Gospel in every house and has now preached to 8,000 on a fourth island. So this man with absolute fearlessness and holy persistency has preached to 58,000 people, although he was not converted until his sixty-seventh year and had had practically no education."

As the above fragment of Ode's story shows, his ministry has been one of deeds rather than of words. "Sacrificial service was the dominant motive in his life," writes Captain Bickel. "He sought opportunities to serve the sick, the aged and the poor, though he had nothing to offer except the love of his heart and the labour of his empty wrinkled hands. His only explanation was, 'It is just to prove my love.' Though the unfortunate man might be a stranger, Ode San always insisted, 'But he is my brother.'"

Thus he went about doing good in all manner of simple and humble ways, telling at every door the Story of the Cross, and of what Jesus had done for him. Naturally he met at the first many rebuffs,

and much ridicule and contempt, for every island has its Scribes and Pharisees, but his earnestness and sincerity, and strong unselfish love, won his way, and Christ's way, into many hearts. He became one of the most valued auxiliaries of the Inland Sea Mission. Among other quaint devices for the spread of the Gospel, he organized an "Old Folks' Society," and a "Bath Society." The success which has attended the work of the vessel in the group of islands through which he has been carrying the Gospel Message owes much to him. "Old Pilgrim's Progress," the Captain used affectionately to call him. With the Red Cross on his hat he still goes about doing good and witnessing for his Master, "the outstanding representative of the Gospel," in that part of the Inland Sea. May his years be many! and may his tribe increase!

A Chinese Scroll

The following tale, borrowed from the Captain's log, illustrates the strange ways by which the Good Shepherd sometimes brings the wandering sheep into the fold.

"A young man from one of the Islands heard the Gospel from the ship's workers in another island. He was impressed, or rather aroused to opposition, studied the Bible for some time in order the better to oppose it, was finally converted and returned to his home. Rumours had gone before him. The village was ready to oppose him. *'Yaso,* had he not joined *Yaso?'* Fearlessly he confessed that he had. Though he belonged to one of the leading families, the verdict was that he must 'move on.' The opposition was headed by one of his former school-

mates, a young man of good character and standing. This young man, as spokesman of the village, demanded, 'Give up this hated thing or leave the village.' My friend smiled, and said quietly, 'Well and good, I will go, but first let me tell you what I believe, so that you and I too may know just why I am expelled.'

"That night, armed with his Bible, he met the village assembly. He was shrewd. He soon had them engaged in a hot argument, more among themselves than with him, as to the merits of Christianity, and the claims of the Bible. My friend kept them at it till midnight, and then suggested another session for the following night. This was held, and then another, and still another, by which time the village was divided into two camps by natural process. My friend then used the favourable party to start a Sunday school. His former schoolmate's hatred grew with the heat of argument, and he vowed to wipe out the disgrace that had come to the village through the introduction of the hated foreign religion, and the book which teaches it. The Christian replied that he would pray that God might lead him to love that Book and its teaching as he had himself come to do.

"Soon after, this schoolmate was drafted into the army and sent to Manchuria. There to his intense disgust the sergeant under whom he drilled and worked day by day proved to be a devout Christian. This sergeant gave him a Testament, and talked to him. Being afraid of incurring the displeasure of his superior he hid his hatred as best he could, but resolved to destroy the Book as soon as he was free from service.

"Just before being ordered home he and others were doing a little looting. He entered a Chinese house, and seeing a scroll on the wall was struck with its beauty, and above all by the words written upon it. He rolled it up and hid it under his tunic and so brought it home as a memento.

"The village was proud of its soldier son. The usual feast of welcome was held on his return. My friend, the Christian, also went to the reception. The returned soldier received the congratulations of the villagers, and then proceeded to show them his memento, saying that the words on the scroll were most beautiful.

"My friend, the believer, listened for a while in silence to the admiring comments, and finally said, 'These are indeed most beautiful words, but do you know where they come from? They are not as you suppose the words of some Chinese sage, they are taken from this Jesus Book which you so groundlessly hate and oppose.'

"The ex-soldier was deeply impressed. He afterward came to my friend, the Christian, and said, 'I surrender! I surrender! That God of yours and that Book of yours find me out wherever I go. Now I will try to know them. In fact, in some measure I already know them, through the life and words of the sergeant under whom I served.' He thereupon sought further instruction, and is now waiting for baptism, while my friend, the Christian, who, by the way, is the clerk of our little *Fukuin Maru* Church, is preparing to enter the theological seminary."

A Prodigal Father

On a beautiful day in May, 1902, while the writer was enjoying the vessel's hospitality, she came to anchor off a certain village. Two years earlier, on the ship's first cruise, an attempt had been made to hold a meeting here, but without success. We wondered what welcome would meet us this time. No sooner had the anchor chain rattled out than the boat was lowered and we were landed on the beach in front of the village. There stood a man who at once introduced himself to us as a Christian,

and invited us to his home, some distance away up the hillside. Here we found a bright-faced old lady, his mother, who gave us a warm greeting. She was totally deaf, but conversed with her son, and through him with us, by some original system of sign-and-lip language, supplemented, if memory serves, with pencil and paper. Their home, though small and plain, was clean and pleasant, and one could see that they were not just the average, ordinary Islanders. Who they were, and how they made our visit to the island successful, is best told in the Captain's own words.

"A head wind and contrary tide since sun-up had caused the Skipper of the Mission Ship to put the sombre-eyed goggles onto his heart-eyes and see all his mercies turn into black patches. The bright May morning, the bold wood-clad mountainous islands, a glorious sunrise and even a good breakfast, which ought to touch a soft spot in an old sailor, had all lost their charm.

" 'If this holds out, I shall not get there in time to hold a meeting to-night,' growled he. 'I have had enough of this crawling for one day. I'll make a fair wind of it and run to that island to leeward and try to get a meeting in there. I failed last time, it is true, but that is all the better reason for going again now. Put your helm up and run her off!'

"Down went the anchor with a rattle and off came the dark goggles from my heart-eyes. I do not know anybody here, how shall I get a hearing? But that has been so in a hundred other places, and there is still the same saving clause. If *I* do not know any one, *God* knows some one. I order the boat out and land. A man is standing on the beach waiting for us. He accosts us at once and here is the 'some one' whom God knew. He leads us up the hill to the house where he and his aged

mother live. Why is the face of the old mother so full of peace, so bright with hope, despite the irritating affliction of twenty long years of total deafness, forming a strange contrast to the faces of the many village women who soon gather near the house to see the strangers? Let me tell their story.

"For seventeen generations, father and son, the men of this family had been the representatives of the old feudal lords of the district. They and they alone had the privilege of wearing a sword, the sign in those days of official dignity. But a great change came. The feudal system was abolished. The father of our friend, overcome by the sudden change, fell into evil ways, deserted his wife and led a wanderer's life. For twenty years they were separated, lost to one another. But the Lord found them both in separate ways—the wandering, wayward man, the lonely, deserted woman. The man having become a Christian made it his duty to search for his wife. He found her and despite her affliction of deafness rejoined her, they living together as Christian man and wife until he died, a period of ten years, during which time they returned to their island home. This act of the father's made a deep impression on the son and his wife. They too became Christians. But business interests engrossed the son's heart and mind. Then came the little Mission Ship. Entrance to the village was refused, so that no meeting was held. Our friend was away from the village then, but on his return heard of our visit. God used this to touch his heart. It reminded him somehow of his faith, now grown weak, and of God whose love he had begun to forget. Then came, just a year later, the testing time. The old father died. For his mother's sake, for the sake of his father's faith and witness, for his own heart's sake, he resolved that his father must have a Christian burial. 'Of course,' say you, 'quite right and proper.' Ah, friend, have you ever lived in a heathen land? If

your relatives were all heathen, your neighbours for miles around all heathen, if there were long established customs and habits pressing you on all sides, if priests and village officials were urging against such a stand, would you, would I, with that man's light to go upon, be ready to do as he did?

"Our friend sent a relative in haste over to the mainland to get a Christian pastor to come to the island and give the father Christian burial. No sooner had he crossed than the wind blew a gale. For the pastor to get over becomes impossible. The son and the stricken mother wait in vain. Officials and relatives urge. The law demands a speedy interment. The priest is ready to attend to ceremonials. Anxiously they wait until the last moment, but the gale blows on and the pastor does not come. Should they call in the priest? 'No,' said the son, 'I will not. It may not be in order, but God is merciful and will accept our humble efforts.' And so the son announced to the village that his father should have Christian burial and that the priest would not be needed. Then the poor old deaf mother and the stout-hearted son, before the astonished villagers gathered in their home, read from the Holy Book of the life that is born in death, and with uncertain voices, these two alone among their heathen neighbours, sang praise to the God they knew. Then to the grave they went, and the neighbours heard the son in prayer speak of hope unconquered by death, and again two voices rose in praise to God. Alone? No, not so, for surely their dear Lord was near.

"And so they bore their witness, and so the ground was prepared. So it was that on the morning when the Skipper grumbled at the tide and wind, the school children saw the little white craft bear down on the village and told our friend it must be the 'Jesus Ship.' Hence his hastening to meet us. A right royal welcome had we and a crowded meeting to crown the day.

"As we bade our friends good-bye and set sail the lesson came to my heart once more which I should have learnt ere this. When God by means of the tides and winds of life speaks, even though it should be to 'put your helm up' and go where going seems hopeless, if you, if I, but go in faithfulness we shall surely find the 'some one' whom God knows waiting and the way prepared for service."

Here was one occasion where the Captain found among his parishioners persons already believers, to whom the visit of the ship proved a great blessing, and who, in turn, became helpers in the work.

In these three narratives we have three instances of persons belonging to the Captain's parish whose conversion to Christianity was not due to the work of the vessel. He whose eyes are in every place had looked upon them and loved them and by the mysterious working of His providence and His Spirit had brought them into His Kingdom. He who worketh hitherto is busy in the remotest islands where men dwell. To every one of His apostles, His missionaries, He says not only, "Lo, I am with you alway," but also, "Is not the Lord gone out before thee?" Here and there, though the instances among the Islanders were few, Captain Bickel reaped that upon which he had bestowed no labour. But to these scattered believers whom other hands had led, the Little White Ship brought new hope and courage and joy, and they in turn added to the success of the work.

XXI

SOME MORE ISLAND STORIES

A Skirmish with the Priests

THE influence which Christianity has had upon the religious leaders of Japan, if the Shinto and Buddhist priests may be called leaders, would be an interesting subject for study. Here and there one has openly joined the Christians. The most noted of these is Pastor Imai, formerly Priest Ko, one of our most acceptable Baptist preachers and writers. For a time he sailed the Inland Sea with Captain Bickel.

Others of the priests recognize that the old faiths have had their day, and that Christianity is the religion of the future, for Japan as for all the rest of the world, but have not the energy, or the courage, to break the bounds of circumstance and come over into a new life themselves. Others, again, fail to discern the signs of the times. They hope to stay the progress of the new religion by borrowing its methods, and so we have a Buddhist Bible that might, in appearance, be mistaken for a New Testament; a Young Men's Buddhist Association; Buddhist Sunday schools; Buddhist versions, or perversions, of popular Christian hymns, and the like. There is talk of a Buddhist Central Tabernacle being erected in Tokyo, to offset the Baptist Tabernacle there.

Among the small proportion of the Islanders who have shown active hostility to the work of the vessel, we are not surprised to find some of the priests of the many temples which glass themselves in the Inland Sea waters. An instance of this occurred at Setoda, in 1902, when that town was made the centre of the East-Central District. It will be recalled that, at the first, Setoda was uncompromisingly opposed to Christianity. This hostility was ere long in a measure overcome, so far as the townsfolk were concerned. Setoda became a regular place of call for the vessel and the evangelistic centre for the East-Central District. A trusty evangelist was put in residence. The priests, however, still chanted a Hymn of Hate. The Captain tells us how they were won over to a more friendly mood:

"Persecution arose at once. The priests of the four Buddhist temples announced meetings three nights in succession. Several hundred people gathered to hear the Christian invaders denounced. The second day the evangelist went to the temples and spoke to the priests. That night those priests not only did not abuse, but turned and told the story of the Gospel Ship, commending the zeal of Christians and urging their followers to be equally eager to propagate their own faith. But a priest from a distance was there. His mood was different. His words bore the impress of his mood. Hard words they were. The evangelist asked permission to speak. Before a temple full of people he cross-questioned the priest and scored decidedly. The priest finally refused to reply, saying, 'You and I are like fire and water, we hate one another,' to which the evangelist answered, 'That is your view; let me state mine. My

Master tells me that you and I are brethren, that I must love you, and this I do.' The next day came the Jesus Ship. 'She is loaded with three hundred preachers from Tokyo to fight the priests,' said rumour. 'Invite the priests to come on board,' said we. They came in gorgeous robes. We had an interesting conversation, in the midst of which they fell to quarrelling among themselves on questions of their own sadly divided faith. We visited their temples the next day, and one at least of them listened to our words with more than common interest. This was four months ago. A few days since, in visiting the place, we noted with real gratitude the cordial spirit shown by the crowded house of listeners; and as we went out and met our temple friends in grand array, going around to collect the cold weather dues, we stopped before a wondering crowd to have a friendly chat.''

Good Captain Kobayashi

One of those who figure most prominently in the chronicles of the Inland Sea Mission is Captain Kobayashi, the principal of the Navigation School on the Island of Yuge. Yuge is about ten miles west from Setoda, the headquarters of the Mission. Principal Kobayashi appears to have recognized the sincerity and value of the vessel's work, and the ability and nobility of her Captain, from the first. He was already a recognized and trusted friend of the vessel in the early days when the writer was guest on board her. The cordial welcome we received from him when our voyage brought us to Yuge, and the privilege the writer enjoyed of giving a talk on some of the great truths of the Gospel to a group of boys from the school, gathered on the vessel's deck one Sunday afternoon, is one of the

pleasant memories of that far-away summer. The Captain had a standing invitation to visit the school, and to hold meetings for the students, whenever the ship's itinerary brought her to the neighbourhood of Yuge. "What shall I talk to them about?" said Captain Bickel, for the school had been established by a community of Buddhists, and was receiving government support. Missionaries are often invited to speak in the public schools, with the proviso that religious subjects are taboo, on the ground that such themes are too abstruse for the immature minds of the pupils, and that religion and education must be kept strictly separate. Captain Kobayashi was not so pedantic. "Talk about!" he exclaimed. "Why, aren't you a Christian, known all over these Islands as a Christian teacher? Talk about your religion; it will do the boys good." Captain Bickel frequently availed himself of this wide-open invitation, and a close bond was formed between the two Captains, and between the School and the Ship. Eventually it was arranged to have a monthly Christian service at the school, Pastor Ito, of Setoda, coming across the water for that purpose; and when the vessel came that way special meetings were held.

Missionary Wynd, of Tokyo, visited the island as our Captain's guest in the summer of 1906. Sunday had been spent in Setoda. "On Monday," he writes, "we weighed anchor and sailed for Yuge, getting there about three in the afternoon. Scarcely had we arrived when a little boat put out from the shore, and soon the principal of the school was on board welcoming the ship with an enthusiasm more typical of the West than of the East.

Captain Kobayashi and group of students

Following close on the heels of the master came a large boat filled with boys and, wonder of wonders, each boy brought a Testament and hymn book. Soon they were arranged on deck, each with his open Bible, while we tried to teach some of the sublime truths of John's Gospel till the sun began to sink. Then they went back, after arranging that we should stay over till the next day and hold a meeting in the school."

Mr. Wynd proceeds to tell us of a less friendly member of the teaching profession. "The bow of the good ship still pointing westward we arrived on Wednesday at Awa Island, where there is another large Navigation School. 'This is one of the places I get a cool reception,' said the Captain. 'But no matter, 'tis the King's business. We'll go over and see what we can do with them, since they don't come to us.' So over we went to the principal's home. 'Yes, the master is at home, but he is ill.' So said the maid as we presented ourselves at the door, and asked for the master. It was said, too, in a tone of voice meant to indicate that that was the end of the matter, and that nothing more could be done; but it wasn't the end of it by any means. That stupid western sailor could not understand a hint, and stood there at the door, hat in hand, a far-away look in his eyes, as if he meant to stay on that spot and study the sky till the sick master recovered. Once or twice from behind a sliding paper door a dark head peeped to take observations, and finding the visitors still there we were at last invited into the little side room. On a side table was arranged a display of whiskey bottles, and we could not help thinking there was

some connection between these bottles and our cool reception. But it is amazing how opposition can be overcome by a man in dead earnest. We did not meet the principal, but received a message saying that he would consent to have a meeting in the school. And a good meeting we had, with two hundred and fifty boys present, though we could not but note the difference between the attitude of the boys here, and that of those at Yuge."

But to return to our friend, Captain Kobayashi. When the Skipper of the *Fukuin Maru* was about to sail for America on furlough in April, 1911, an enthusiastic farewell meeting was held at Setoda. One feature of the gathering was the attendance of the teachers and pupils of the Yuge school, who had not grudged the time and labour needed to cross those leagues of water. Captain Kobayashi had composed a poem for the occasion, as an expression of the warm esteem in which Captain Bickel is held for the sake of his labours of love on behalf of the Islands; and one feature of the celebration was the singing of this poem, to a popular air, by the whole body of students. Captain Kobayashi expressed the wish, on behalf of the school, that this poem, with an English metrical translation, should be sent to the Missionary Society in America, as an expression of gratitude for the benefits conferred on the Islands through the work of the *Fukuin Maru*. The present scribe, at our Captain's request, made the following translation, which is severely literal; and the accompanying paraphrase, which presents the thought and feeling of the poem in ordinary western style. These, with the original verses, were duly for-

warded to Boston, and are doubtless treasured in the archives of the Society.

In Farewell to Captain Bickel

Spring at climax, wind east.
Willows green, flowers blushing.
Laud-laden, prow homeward,
Keel rushing, sail swelling,
Lo! the Fukuin her skipper,
Him we greet Captain Bickel!

The west world's holy faith,
Law of love, he proclaimeth:
"For the dear sake of Christ
Love thou even thine hater.
Doth one buffet thy cheek,
Yield thou also the other."

Love's behest, ah! how high!
But heart-lowly we follow.
Kindest Teacher, best Friend,
Setting sail o'er wide ocean,
At our parting, this morrow,
Ah! our hearts,—who may know them?

Paraphrase

To-day is the year at full flood,
And the winds from the warm ocean reaches
Sing loud with the answering pines,
Sing low thro' the green drooping willows.
Again on our fair Island slopes
In glory of purple and crimson
The azaleas have spread their brocade,
Rich as gown of a maid at her marriage.

Now our Captain, more bravely adorned,
In brocade of the honours past telling
Wherewith Heaven hath requited his toil,
To the home-land in triumph returneth.
Light, light rides his bark on the wave,
Wide, wide swell his sails to the breezes,
Our Captain, beloved by the Isles,
Of the fair white ship, "The Evangel."

'Twas for Jesus' dear sake that he came
To our Islands forsaken, forgotten,
Bringing us riches more rare
Than the costliest bales of the merchant,
Bringing that heavenly law
Which is lifting the life of the nations,
The blessèd evangel of love
Which the Father hath sent to His children.

How holy the Message and high!
And with reverence, heart-lowly, we greet it.
How divine is its lofty behest!
And our souls leap to life at its challenge.
"Repay thou thy foe with thy love,
And deny not thy cheek to the smiter.
Remember thy Lord on the Cross,
How He prayed for His slayers, 'Forgive them.'"

Such is the Message he brought;
That by love are we sons of our Father,
Who alike on the evil and good,
Sends the gift of His rain and His sunshine;
That by love are we brothers of Christ,
Who gave up Himself for His haters;
That only to love is to live,
For of love is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ah! Teacher and Friend of our Isles,
Who hast taught us to love by thy loving,
What gifts—but no hands can repay,
Nor our lips our thanksgivings can fashion.
To-day must we say thee farewell?
Must the lonely expanse of the oceans
Rise boundless betwixt us and thee?
What tears—Ah! thine own is our sorrow!

Good Captain Kobayashi's interest in the *Fukuin Maru* did not slacken with the passing years, and we shall meet him and his boys again when the last long farewell is to be said. It is told of him also that "though not himself an avowed Christian, he surprised a group of educators at Tokyo, when they were discussing the discipline of schools, by saying boldly that the spirit of the Little White Ship had so far pervaded his own student body as to solve his problems of discipline."

XXII

THE CAPTAIN'S LAST CRUISE

THE eighteenth year of the Era of the *Fukuin Maru* promised to be one of unusual growth in the Inland Sea Mission. The new mission ship, released by order of government from her moorings in the pine-fringed bight of Miyanoura after chafing at her cables for a year and a half, was again cruising among the Islands, and everywhere there was a "sound of abundance of rain." In the several inner sea groups, in which work had been prosecuted since the first *Fukuin Maru* made her voyage of discovery, the new Teaching had already won a large place for itself. On Shozu, on Ikuchi, on Oshima, in the Kurahashi group, everywhere believers and enquirers were multiplying. The light was spreading. New islands, new villages were opening their doors to the Gospel messengers. Sunday schools, various kinds of Christian societies, industrial enterprises and the like were increasing in number and influence.

Out on the newly opened Isles of the Deep Sea, also, the signs of promise were bright. Mr. Shibata, recently ordained assistant pastor of the *Fukuin Maru* Church, had his evangelistic centre at Hirado, on the island of that name, and was carry-

ing on regular work at fifteen of the principal places in the four island clusters of the South-western District. Already, in 1916, he had gathered about him a considerable group of believers and enquirers. Among these were two young men belonging to two of the leading *Shizoku* families, the gentry as we would say. Not only had they become Christians themselves but had consecrated their lives to the service of Christ as preachers of the Gospel, and were ready to enter the Theological School.

The Captain's health, too, which from the time of his breakdown in the second year of the work he had never fully recovered, and which had given frequent occasion for grave concern, had latterly seemed to be growing more robust. This was no doubt due in part to the physical and mental relief afforded by the splendid efficiency of the new vessel. The bone-breaking, heart-breaking tussles with wind and tide, the sleepless nights at the wheel exposed to cold and storm, were things of the past. On the spiritual side of the work, also, the intense strain of the early years was greatly relieved. He had come to his field single-handed, even the evangelist who accompanied him on his first voyage proving to be no true helper. As for the ship's company, it was a case of a man's foes being they of his own household. On all the clustered islands which formed his parish, there was not a house where he could expect a welcome, nor a man whom he could count his friend. Now, the seven sailors were brethren beloved, fellow-workers in the Gospel, the joy of their skipper's heart. The Shepherds of the Isles, each in his own district,

were pushing forward their work with something of the Captain's own tireless devotion. Among the Islands were a thousand homes glad to receive him as guest; many thousands of persons proud to claim his acquaintance. From among these Island folks, everywhere from Shozu to the Gotos, lay workers were appearing, men and women, assuring the growth and permanence of the work. No wonder that the Captain's health had begun to mend, and no wonder that he looked forward to the year 1917 as one of rapidly developing mission activities.

Apart from the three hundred baptized believers there had arisen a great body of adherents, well-wishers and friends of the Captain and his work. The four thousand boys and girls in the Sunday schools, the several thousands of interested persons listed on the ship's books and reading the ship's literature, the forty thousand members of that four-hundred-section class in Christian doctrine which had been meeting for sixteen years, all these and many more counted the visits of the little ship the visits of a friend. In scores of islands she had become a part of the community life. Where her Captain had been a stranger and a foreigner, uncompanioned save for the companionship of the ever-present Lord, he was now the universal friend, "the best loved man in the Islands."

The membership of the *Fukuin Maru* Church had increased tenfold in eight years. Though scattered over sixty islands they had been well shepherded, and the Captain could say of them, "Of those whom Thou hast given me I have lost none." The church was alive and growing, and the day seemed already near when there would be a thou-

sand names on its roll. We of the mainland had begun to anticipate a time when the number of Island Christians would overtake and surpass the aggregate membership of all the mainland Baptist churches. The Japanese Baptist Convention, which had been somewhat inclined to look askance on the Inland Sea Mission as an erratic effort on behalf of ignorant and irresponsive peasants and fishermen, had come to recognize the importance both of the field and of the work, and had asked that the groups of Christians on the Islands be erected into an Island Association, to have equal standing in the Convention with the several other associations. For while the whole body of believers on the Islands were still enrolled in the *Fukuin Maru* Church, already the local groups of Christians who worshipped at Tonosho, Setoda, Agenosho, Kurahashi, Hirado, and elsewhere were practically branch churches, ripening for separate organization. Humanly speaking the day was not far when on every important island there would be a church of Jesus Christ, of men and women saved through His grace and united in His service. The year 1917 was expected to bring that prospect a long way toward realization.

There was, however, one feature of the situation which must have caused the Captain much wear and tear of mind and soul. For a year or two the appropriations for the work of the Inland Sea Mission, always inadequate, had been painfully insufficient. In the financial year 1915–16, "under the most stringent pressure and painful economies" the cost of the undertaking had considerably overrun the grant which the Mission Treasury felt able

to make. For 1916–17 the appropriation was even less, notwithstanding the great increase in the cost of carrying on the work caused by the rapid rise in prices through the War. This rendered imperative a sweeping reduction in the expenses of the *Fukuin Maru* enterprise; which meant that the whole enterprise was weakened and crippled just at the time when to be properly furnished meant rapid and solid growth. The plan of providing each of the five evangelists with the assistant so sorely needed had of course to be dropped, even the assistant already placed with Pastor Ito at Setoda being withdrawn. One of the Five Shepherds even, he of the Kurahashi Group, had to discontinue his service. The colportage work of the little *Fukuin Maru No. 2,* carried on by her zealous Captain Hirata, had to cease. The mileage of the *Fukuin Maru's* evangelistic voyages was sharply curtailed, for every mile costs money with fuel oil at three prices. One of the trips to the Deep Sea Isles had to be cut out. The use of the handy gasoline launch, which had been saving the Captain so much hard labour, had to be dispensed with. Literature expenses, too, had to be greatly reduced. The 4,000 children in the Sunday schools must forego their much prized lesson cards. The ship's newspaper, a monthly messenger of cheer to thousands of lonely island homes, was cut down to half its size. Even with all these and similar heart-breaking economies the work faced a deficit of a thousand dollars. And this in spite of the fact that the Captain put every cent of his personal income, outside bare family expenses, into the work. What this drastic entrenchment in his belovèd work, at

a time so big with promise, meant to him in travail and burden of soul, may be left to the imagination of those who had it in the power of their hand to relieve him. Would that a few thousand dollars of the surplus billions in the hands of American Baptists might have found their way to the Little White Ship! Will any similar sum spent on the War be a tithe as useful?

Apart from the financial problem the outlook for the year was most reassuring, and our Captain, accustomed as a sailor and a handy-man to make his tools serve his need, entered upon its work full of enthusiasm.

In February a somewhat severe attack of illness of a paratyphoidal nature laid him prostrate, and he did not allow himself time to fully recover his strength before returning to his work. In April the Annual Meetings of the *Fukuin Maru* Church, an important event of the year, were to be held, and into the necessary arrangements for these he threw himself with his customary zeal. Of the doings at these meetings we have to thank Mrs. Bickel for the following interesting report, contributed to the May number of *Gleanings*.

"I thought I should like to tell all my fellow-workers about our Annual Church Meetings this year which began April 1st and went along on various lines until the 6th. Such a time of fellowship and encouragement as it was, I shall never forget!

"This year the meetings were held in the town of Tonosho, the centre of the most eastern of our five Island sections. This section is in charge of Murakami San and his good wife.

"For some time before these meetings, the workers with Captain had been planning all sorts of things. The chief feature was to bring up on the ship from the East, Central, Western and Southwestern Groups as many of the believers as possible. They were to gather at Setoda and make the run to Tonosho, a distance of eighty-five miles. This of course sounded very good to the many who had planned to go to the meetings, and they looked forward to the trip with no end of pleasure. Captain and I hoped and hoped the weather would be good, for we knew that journey, as we have been over the ground so many times in the past nineteen years, in bad weather and good; and I laughingly said to Captain, 'I think you had better let the engineer make some tin basins in case of need!' Well, all our fears were needless.

"When April 1st dawned, at 5 A. M., Captain and I were standing at the gangway in Setoda Straits receiving the first load of guests, while the anchor was being weighed and the sailors getting everything ready for our journey. It was an ideal day, with not a ripple on the water, and beautiful sunshine overhead. We left Setoda at 5:30 A. M. and running five miles picked up another boat full of guests, then five miles further on slowed down again for more guests, then went on to another village where we picked up the last three at 7 A. M.

"What a happy crowd it was, just like a big family! Some were looking at pictures down in our Assembly Room, some were on the bridge with Captain, some with me in the deck house, some singing hymns on deck or chatting together. One and all were full of joy. Then at luncheon time we sat on the ship's deck enjoying our food and looking around at God's handiwork, rejoicing that we were His children.

"A strange feeling of awe seemed to fill the hearts of these Christian delegates from four prefectures as

they passed island after island where other Christians had come to be their brothers and sisters during these few brief, busy years of the ship's work.

"The lighthouse folk at Nabe Shima having read of the proposed run of the ship, saluted with flags and handkerchiefs and babies in arms as we passed by. Tonosho was in sight at two o'clock. All got ready to go ashore when we anchored, but first an impromptu Thanksgiving Service was held on deck. When that was finished and the anchors down, the Eastern Group believers were waiting on shore to welcome the guests we had brought. Our intention to go to the hotel direct was dropped in the sea when the two deacons from Tonosho came on board, for they said, 'We have been waiting for the ship to come and all its load of guests to be present at the baptismal service of nine candidates which is now to take place over yonder.' Then there was eagerness to get ashore so as not to keep the service waiting too long. It was a fine service and we came back to the ship for supper thankful for all the blessings God is giving to the workers in these Islands; but the day was not finished, for there were officers' meetings and welcome meetings in the evening which lasted well on toward midnight.

"Next morning the meetings began at 9 A. M. I could not get there until later and I shall not forget the impression made on me when I entered that hall (which had been loaned for the occasion by the town, the local preaching-place being too small) and saw it well filled with an earnest assembly of believers, men and women loving the same Father we have been taught to love since our childhood. My mind went back to the first years of my husband's work in these Islands and my first years of ship life, and though I have had many and many unpleasant experiences I could truly say I was thankful that God had called Captain to this work; and though I have rebelled often at my life on the ship yet

it seemed that morning as I sat in that meeting, truly all was worth while.

"The morning meeting was just a helpful service for the Christians. It lasted until noon. Then we all went to the hotel and had our noon meal together as happy as could be. After lunch, the annual church business meeting was held. That lasted until 6 P. M. Captain and I came back to the ship for our evening meal, just a bit tired after sitting Japanese fashion from 9 A. M. until 6 P. M.

"That evening another meeting, an open praise and prayer meeting, was held which with the reading of personal messages from 147 members in many places took till midnight. Thus ended the second day.

"Tuesday, the third day, the meeting began at 9 A. M., with a solemnly joyous Communion Service. Such a precious time it was! That ended at 11 A. M. and then all came on board with their lunches and were taken round to a place fourteen miles distant called Shimomura, whence they could climb Kankake Mountain, one of the noted places of Japan.

"Wednesday morning all the workers from the different centres of the Island work came on board to have a formal workers' meeting, to plan new efforts to help the Island people. That meeting lasted until 2 P. M. Then as all seemed tired with meetings it was suggested that we invite the remaining believers and climb another interesting mountain on this island, where every year thousands of pilgrims come to worship. We all willingly went and had another delightful afternoon together, a big family all one in love and faith.

"Thursday morning all the visiting believers and workers, men and women, came on board at 7 A. M. hoping to reach our anchorage at Tonosho in time for the guests and workers to catch the morning steamer, to return to their homes. But just as we were coming into Tonosho Harbour the steamer was going out. But ' 'Tis

an ill wind that blows nobody good,' and instead of being troubled over it we rejoiced to have one more day together.

"Mr. and Mrs. Murakami invited our women workers and women guests to their home for that day and night. Our evangelist stayed on board. We had a good time that day. After dinner another noted place on the island was visited, with the usual praise meeting in the open air. Then in the evening we all met at Mr. Murakami's for a *gyu-nabe* (a stew of meat and vegetables cooked over the *hibachi* 'while you wait'). I just should have liked all our friends to have peeped in at us that evening, making our *gyu-nabe* at different tables, laughing and talking and oh, so happy with each other. Thus our Annual Church Rally ended with a social meeting, for the next morning, Friday, all the visitors were up and at the steamship landing by 7 A. M., to part in different directions for homes and fields of work, rejoicing in opportunities of loving service for the Master. And as Captain and I waved them farewell, we were tired? Yes; a little, after all was over, but oh, so grateful for all that was being done for these Island people in God's name."

This was the first time the Annual Meeting had been held at the eastern end of the Captain's far-stretching parish, and there was some fear that the attendance would be slim and the results meagre, but this fear was soon dispelled. Among the groups of Christians whom the ship picked up on her way east from Setoda, and in the gathering at Tonosho, there was evident a deep spiritual earnestness that filled the hearts of Captain and Mrs. Bickel with thankfulness and joy, and with a new confidence in the Island believers as a power behind the future work of the vessel. "They came

away from the farewell meeting filled with satisfaction and gratitude and expectant hope." Yes, they looked forward, with reason, to many years of joyful and fruitful, if arduous service. With the daily increasing spiritual momentum of the work what might not be hoped for within ten years, within twenty years, within the years of active labour the Captain might hope to spend in his Island parish? But he had sailed his last cruise in the Little White Ship. This was his last meeting with his people of the Inland Sea, his last public service on the Islands. It was fitting that it should be at Tonosho, of Shozu, within view of those mountains into whose dark shadow the little mission craft had crept that first night of active service. It was fitting, too, that the triumphal progress through the Islands to gather up the Christians waiting on their shores should have begun at Setoda—surly, churlish, grudging Setoda, now overflowing with good-will and helpfulness, the Christian Capital of the Inland Sea.

XXIII

"SUNSET AND EVENING BELL"

WHEN Captain Bickel arrived in Japan, in May, 1898, we thought him the embodiment of health and manly vigour. Tall, broad-shouldered, muscular, with the wholesome colour and clear eye of a hardy seaman, he looked fit for fifty years of arduous labour. His seafaring life had inured him to hardship and exposure.

With a sailor's lavishness, and a Christian's consecration, he flung himself upon his task, body and soul. The magnitude of that task, its inherent difficulties, his inadequate equipment, were to him but the more compelling challenge to heroic endeavour. It hardly occurred to him in those first ardent years that he might overdraw his physical resources. When friends urged moderation he smilingly replied that if the burdens were heavy the shoulders on which they were laid were broad.

Not that he was in matters of health a deliberate spendthrift. In the matter of diet, indeed, he was more careful than missionaries usually are. He consistently refused to touch Japanese food, and so far as life on shipboard would permit, insisted on an appetizing and wholesome foreign diet, cooked and served in foreign style. *O-mi-o-tsuke,*

fried *tofu,* shredded cuttlefish, herring-and-kelp, *soba-yaki,*—from all such native dishes he held himself strictly aloof. He believed that suitable and sufficient nourishment greatly reduces the need for rest and sleep, a contention which the experiences of sailors seem to substantiate, and a doctrine which has been held by other than seafaring men. His intensely active mind made it impossible for him to rest during his working hours, as other men rest; and as for sleep, he allowed himself short rations, hardly half of what ordinary mortals need, and it was no unusual thing for him to keep an all-night vigil, coaxing his little ship along to her next place of call.

The intense physical and nervous strain of the work, however, rapidly told upon even his wrought-iron constitution, and already in the second year of his mission he found his health seriously threatened. From that time forward he was probably never in sound and comfortable health. Again and again he was compelled to lay up the mission craft in some snug cove among the Islands, and lie up, himself, for repairs. For the most part, however, the ardour of his soul overcame the weakness of his body, and he remained at his post, doing more than a man's work, in spite of feebleness and pain.

As remarked elsewhere, the conditions under which he laboured became gradually less exacting, as his parish became familiar ground, and the vessel's equipment more efficient; and the Captain's health, we thought, was slowly returning to a normal state. Then came the serious illness of February, 1917. It passed, as other attacks had passed, but its effects still lingered when the time

Ninth Annual Meeting of *Fukuin Maru* Church, April, 1917, at Tonosho, Shozu Shima

came for the Annual Meetings at Tonosho. To the widely scattered Island Christians these meetings were the great event of the year, the one opportunity for mutual acquaintance and fellowship and counsel. Without their belovèd Leader's presence half the joy and inspiration would be lacking. So the Captain was there, spending himself prodigally day by day to be a blessing to them all. So they kept the feast with gladness, not dreaming that they should see his face no more.

But when the meetings were ended and the believers had dispersed to their Island homes, the Little White Ship did not turn her prow again toward the west. Her Skipper had an errand to Kobe. He would be back in a few days, and ready for a long cruise down the western isles. He saw that the vessel was safely moored, and gave orders to the crew to keep all taut and trim. He cast a last keen glance over the ship, the ship that he loved, that was part of his life, of himself, with which he hoped to accomplish so much for his Island parish in the years that lay stretching into the future. The ship's boat lay at the foot of the ladder. He handed Mrs. Bickel in, and the boat sprang away toward the beach. "*Sayonara!*" he cried to the sailors grouped at the head of the ladder, caps in hand. "*Sayonara! Hayaku o kaeri nasai!*" ("Good-bye! Come back soon!") they called cheerily, and returned smiling to their daily tasks.

The hospitable missionary home at Kobe, under the pine-clad heights of Mount Rokko, welcomed the Captain and his wife as honoured guests. Had not the Mission to the Islanders been Dr. Thomson's

dream back in the 'eighties, a dream which came to fulfillment in the fair white ship and her noble Captain? They would have some pleasant days together while the doctors put Captain Bickel in repair.

It was found necessary to perform a slight surgical operation. No serious consequences were anticipated. A few days' rest and he would be back on his ship. What new villages, new islands could he bring into his next cruise? What new features could he introduce, that would further the progress of the work? He must not miss calling on Kato Suji-saburo, the gruff old farmer on Kitagi, and on Tanaka Haru-ko, the sick widow on Innoshima.

The operation was apparently successful. The wound quickly healed. But the patient did not make the expected rapid recovery. Something was wrong. He had drawn too heavily on his reserves. The effects of the February illness were still in his blood, a subtle poison that baffled the doctor's skill. Septic peritonitis and septic pneumonia, they called it, for which the *materia medica* contained no remedy.

She who had for twenty years shared his voyages and his labours was beside him, and loving friends about him. All was done that human love and skill could do. There was another Presence, too, in that quiet chamber, as the sun went down, that of Him whom he had loved and whom he had served with a love and loyalty beyond what is common to man, of Him with whom he had companied many a lonely night at the vessel's wheel, of Him who had been with Nagai Minoru in the thatched cot-

tage on Shozu Shima—the presence of Him of whom our great poet has written,

"And I shall see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the Bar."

It was the 11th of May, and eventide. The sunset glow was fading over the Inland Sea. Down on the Little White Ship the "second dog watch" was ending, and the sailor on duty strolled up the deck to strike the "eight bells" that usher in the first watch of the night. But for the Captain the dawn was breaking. It was morning in heaven. The Captain had made his last port. The Bar was crossed and he had met his Pilot face to face.

"Now it befell when the time was come in the which the man of God should die, that God bent over the face of Moses and kissed him. And the soul leaped up in joy, and went with the Kiss of God to Paradise. Then a sad cloud draped the heavens, and the winds wailed, 'Who lives now upon earth to fight against sin and error?' And a voice answered, 'Such a prophet never arose before.' And the earth lamented, 'I have lost the holy one.' And Israel lamented, 'We have lost the shepherd.' And the angels sang, 'He is come in peace to the arms of God.'"

XXIV

A TRIUMPHAL FUNERAL

THE angels sang, "He is come in peace to the arms of God;" but the earthly body, broken and worn with many years of toil and pain through which the too ardent spirit had driven it, lay at rest at last, in the sleep that knows no waking, in the quiet guest-chamber of the missionary home at the foot of Mount Rokko. The soul God had taken to Himself; the body in which it had tabernacled He left to us to lay in its last resting place with such marks of love and honour as might be.

The sense of loss and sorrow in the hearts of the Island Christians when the news of the Captain's departure was flashed down the Inland Sea was like that felt at the death of a belovèd father. At first they were stunned by the suddenness and heaviness of the blow, not knowing which way to turn for help and comfort. Then, as the wonderful years which had passed over the Islands since the beginning of the era of the *Fukuin Maru* rushed back into memory, the beauty of the Captain's life and the splendour of the purpose which had animated him, and of the achievements he had wrought, aroused in them an ardour which made grief forgotten. The news of his death became to

them a clarion call to do him honour by taking up and carrying forward the work for which he had lived and died. "It is for us," they cried, "to make sure, by the grace of God, that though our leader has fallen his work is not to fail, but to move forward to fresh conquests, through the power of the Undying, Conquering Spirit which wrought through him. Our Captain and Shepherd has been called to his reward, but in his place a thousand Captain Bickels must arise, his spiritual successors, among our Island villages." For the comfort of their own hearts, and to perpetuate the Captain's memory and influence in the Inland Sea, some of the Islanders proposed that a place for his burial be chosen on one of the islands within his parish. Surely no cemetery could offer a spot so beautiful and so fitting. There, under the leaning pines beneath whose boughs he had gone to and fro on errands of mercy, beside the shining waters that had made a path for his ship, would his rest be sweet. Around him would be the islands and the villages of the people whom he loved, and who through him had learned the meaning and the practice of love. It would be a sacred place to all the Island Christians, for generations to come. Thither they would gather year by year in loving pilgrimage, streaming up from distant isles to spread flowers on his grave, and to kindle anew their zeal for the cause for which he died.

There were others than Islanders who hoped that the Captain would be laid to rest somewhere in the Inland Sea. Over in America, among those who knew the Captain and the Islands, the wish was expressed that the body should be entrusted for

sepulture to the Island believers, and that they should spread his couch on one of the Island shores. He belonged to them, and they to him.

Wiser counsels, however, prevailed. Missionaries of experience, and thoughtful men among the Island Christians, foresaw the danger that such a tomb might eventually be transformed into a shrine, where worship with Shinto rites would be paid by simple-minded Island folk, uninstructed in Christian doctrine, to the spirit of the wonderful foreigner who had brought such blessings to the Inland Sea. Such things have happened in Japan. In a sense, every man who dies becomes at death a *Kami*—if a Buddhist, a *Hotoke*—if a Shintoist, in either case a quasi-divine being, worthy of worship. An important part of a Japanese funeral is the worshipping of the newly deified spirit, by the priests and the friends of the deceased. In the court of a little temple near Omachi, a few years ago, the writer was present at the funeral service of one of the Omachi Christians,—not of the Baptist Church,—whose Shinto relatives insisted that the body have burial according to the Shinto rites. At a certain point in the ceremony the officiating priests approached, in turn, the coffin, and addressed the spirit of the dead man, presenting offerings of food and drink, and burning incense before the coffin. Then the relatives and friends came forward one by one, and paid homage to the dead, with bowing, clapping of hands as in ordinary worship, and offerings of food or incense. Even some of the few Christians present did not hesitate to show respect to the dead by bowing and burning incense. In a land where all the dead are divine, and every

grave a sacred place, it is not strange that the tombs of the illustrious dead speedily become actual places of worship. Once in a while this happens to the grave of a foreigner, as in the case of Will Adams, the Kentish shipwright who lived and died in Japan a virtual but honoured prisoner, before the Restoration, and who may be called the Father of the Japanese Navy. At his tomb high up on the hill overlooking the Yokosuka Naval Dock-yards, worship has been paid, and a yearly festival is kept in his honour in a certain ward in Tokyo. That the tomb of Captain Bickel, the one wonderful, upstanding, outstanding personage known to Inland Sea chronicles, should in time be regarded as a shrine, where his spirit would be worshipped and his blessing invoked upon the fishermen's nets and the farmers' growing crops, was a not unreasonable apprehension. There are thousands of shrines in Japan sacred to persons very much less worthy of receiving divine honours than was our good Captain.

The Island believers, therefore, for the Captain's sake, and for the sake of the future of Christianity among the Islands, consented to have the funeral service at Kobe, and that the burial should take place in the beautiful foreign cemetery at Kasugano, near the city. In place of an Island tomb they planned a better memorial, of which mention will be made later.

The funeral service was in Kobe, held in the Baptist Church at 2 P. M. on May 13th. Previous to this, at one o'clock, there had been held at the home of Dr. Thomson a brief but impressive service for foreign acquaintances and specially intimate

friends, after which the beautiful casket, accompanied by these intimate friends, and with a great quantity of floral offerings, had been borne slowly to the church, with a company of students from the Yuge Navigation School, in naval uniform, as a guard of honour.

The building was already filled, and a great crowd was gathered about the doors, unable to enter. Many had come a long distance from the various islands; the Christian workers as a matter of course, but also many of the chief persons among the believers. These were like men that mourn for a departed aged mother, and took part in the service in an agitated manner, as though not able to realize the truth of the suddenness of the Captain's decease. Among them were the first mate of the mission vessel, and the sailors who had for many years been under the Captain's influence; besides the lads from the Navigation School, who stood in sorrow beside the bier. There were also present many members of the missionary body, not only our own Baptist missionaries, but others, including the missionaries working in Kobe, the principals of the Kwansai College and the Girls' College, and others.

The funeral service was conducted by Pastor Mitamura. Amid an awed hush, broken only by the sound of subdued sobbing, rose the quiet strains of the organ prelude. Dr. Walne, veteran of the Southern Baptist Japan Mission, made the prayer of invocation. Then came the opening hymn, lifted to heaven as a response of smitten hearts to Him who chastens whom He loves. Pastor Takeda read the lesson from the Old Testament and Pastor

Ogawa that from the New. Pastor Toda, who of all the Island Shepherds had companied longest with the Captain, offered prayer. The personal history of the deceased, always a feature of a Japanese Christian funeral, was read by the clerk of the *Fukuin Maru* Church, Mr. Watanabe Shinichi. There followed two funeral addresses, one by Dr. Thomson, representing Captain Bickel's foreign friends, and one by Pastor Yoshikawa, on behalf of the Japanese friends. Dr. Thomson spoke in English, and his address, though brief, had a power and pathos born of long and intimate friendship, and produced a deep impression upon the English-speaking part of the congregation. Pastor Yoshikawa is one of our veteran Christian leaders, a man of unusual ability, spirituality and consecration. His evangelistic activities have reached all parts of Japan, and at times he has come to the aid of Captain Bickel in the Inland Sea Mission. His address, which was of course in Japanese, opened with the words of a well-known little poem, of which only the general thought can be put into English.

"As if yon Star, above the moorland's height
But hardly risen, should fall to setting fleet,
So is the Teacher rapt from mortal sight,
His Mission incomplete."

After speaking in the warmest terms of Captain Bickel as a Shipmaster and as a Missionary, and dwelling upon his deep love for the Islanders and his ardent devotion to his work, he repeated the lines with which his sermon had begun, and added, in closing:

"But such words are, after all, only the disappointed sigh of those who are without God, without Christ, without hope. Christ said, 'Verily, verily I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abides alone. But if it die it brings forth much fruit.' Is not this indeed a truth of deep and wide significance? It might be supposed that if our Lord had remained long on earth, like Confucius or Buddha, He would have borne much fruit. I believe this to be exactly contrary to the truth. It was by His death that our Lord bore much fruit. Yes, Captain Bickel himself is one of the fruits borne by the death of Christ. It is a common saying that 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.' The Captain's death will be the seed of the *Fukuin Maru* Church. The kernel of wheat has fallen into the earth and died, and will bear much fruit. So what need to repeat the sigh,

> "'As if yon Star, above the moorland's height
> But lately risen, should fall to setting fleet?'

"I like to believe that when he had closed his eyes in his long sleep it was with a song of victory and thanksgiving that his spirit ascended to heaven, rejoicing that he had been the Captain not of an ordinary secular ship, but of the *Fukuin Maru*, the Ship of Glad Tidings, that he had spent his life as a Missionary rather than in some worldly calling.

"Ah! let us keep in memory his toil and pain of nineteen years, storm-beaten and rain-drenched, enduring in his body the buffeting of winds and waves, in the navigation of his vessel, and in his spirit the buffeting of the stormy passions of human hearts, as he sought to bring to men the Gospel of Love.

"The Scripture saith, 'Henceforth blessèd are the dead that die in the Lord. Yea, saith the Spirit, they shall rest from their labours. Their works shall follow

them.' Ah! their works shall follow them! Their works shall follow them!"

At the close of this address the customary invitation was given to any present who might wish to add a word in token of regard for the deceased. This has become a regular feature of Japanese Christian funerals, and takes the place which the offering of worship to the dead holds in the Buddhist and Shinto burial rites. Each of those who respond to the invitation advances to the side of the coffin, where he stands facing it rather than the audience, and after gravely bowing as a mark of respect for the dead reads or utters a few terse sentences of eulogy and regard. Among those who availed themselves of this opportunity to offer a last tribute of respect were Deacon Miyaji on behalf of the *Fukuin Maru* Church; Mr. Murakami, Shepherd of the Shozu District, representing the Shepherds of the Isles; Mr. Hirata, probably our old friend the converted boatswain, representing the officers of the *Fukuin Maru* Church; Pastors Akagawa and Nakajima, on behalf of the Japanese Baptist pastors and evangelists of the mainland; Mr. Kaneko, head teacher of the Yuge Navigation School, in behalf of the principal, Captain Kobayashi; Mr. Royal Fisher, representing the missionary body, and Professor Holtom and Mr. Kumano, the faculty and students of the Theological Seminary.

One of the deacons of the *Fukuin Maru* Church now came forward with a sheaf of telegrams and letters, brief messages from friends of Captain Bickel and admirers of his work, from many parts

of Japan, with some from over-seas. At the funeral of any prominent person many such messages are received, to be either read, if the time permit, as a part of the service, or, after the names of the senders have been mentioned, to be placed in the hands of the family of the deceased. In the present instance it was of course impossible to read even all the names of those who showed their friendship and interest in this way. These names were copied into a book by a Japanese friend of Mrs. Bickel, with the telegrams given in Japanese and in English. This book lies before the present writer. The names alone would fill a chapter. There are four hundred of them, of which about two hundred and fifty appear to be of those who sent telegrams.

Among those who sent these messages of regret and condolence were people in every walk of life. There were such leading men as Dr. Nitobe, the eminent Christian statesman, educationalist, and social leader; Mr. Shibata, Chief of the Bureau of Religions in the Department of Education; Mr. Yabushita, Public Procurator of the Kyoto District Court; Mr. Kobayashi, Chief of Police at Arita; Mr. Ueda, Chief of the County of Toyoda; Mr. Atachi, Chief of the Setoda Salt-Inspection Office, and Mr. Uchiyama, Chief of the Setoda Police. There were mayors, town officials, railway officials, principals of schools. Messages came from scores of churches, Baptist and other; from many Sunday schools; from missionaries and Japanese pastors of several denominations; from the Secretary of the Federation of Japanese Churches; from several Girls' Schools; from the

Salvation Army, and so forth. From all parts of the Captain's Island Parish, and from many places on the mainland shores of the Inland Sea, came these brief pregnant messages of sorrow and love. Perhaps among all these there is none more touching than that from the vessel's crew: "*Tengoku de aishite kudasai.*" "In the Heavenly Land, be pleased to love us!"

Pastor Ito, of Setoda, on behalf of the bereaved family, thanked those who had gathered for their presence and sympathy, and the service, which had covered about three hours, closed with the benediction, in Japanese, by Dr. Axling, of Tokyo.

The casket being again placed in the hearse was slowly borne to its final resting place at Kasugano, under escort of the Navigation School students from Yuge. When the last solemn rites were finished, and the eternal farewells said, the dusk of evening was already falling, but some of the women mourners lingered beside the grave reluctant to depart, like the women of the Gospel at the tomb of our Lord. "Suddenly the twilight chill fell upon me. I was as one in a trance, and everything around me seemed unreal. I only knew that sorrow had descended on my soul."

The funeral at Kobe was followed by memorial services at a number of other places, as at Osaka, Yokohama and Tokyo, and doubtless at Himeji, on the mainland, and at the several evangelistic centres among the Islands. Among these services, that held at the chief centre, Setoda, was the most important. The day appointed, the 10th of June, saw a great gathering of the Island Folk, from Shozu Shima in the east to Hirado in the far

southwest,—Christians, enquirers, and personal friends of Captain Bickel. Among them might be seen county chiefs, headmen of towns and villages, principals of schools, and other important Island personages. Across from Yuge, ten miles over the water, came good Captain Kobayashi, accompanied by the officers and students of his school.

In the order of exercises, and in the spirit that prevailed, this service so much resembled that held at Kobe that no detailed account is necessary. The memorial addresses were made by Dr. Axling and Pastor Imai, the converted Buddhist priest, one of the early *Fukuin Maru* evangelists. Few foreigners could attend a meeting at Setoda, but besides Dr. Axling there was present also Missionary Briggs, of Himeji, the long-time associate and intimate personal friend of the Captain. From his letter to the July number of *Gleanings* the following paragraphs are copied:

"To write about a funeral is not usually the task one would choose, yet when I was asked to write about Captain Bickel's funeral I eagerly said, 'Yes!'

"It is not that I wish to write much about the people who came, although at the Kobe service so many Japanese and foreigners gathered from far and near, that the undertaker said it was the largest funeral he had ever conducted, and at the *Fukuin Maru* Church service at Setoda, June 10th, the little boats kept coming from the surrounding and the distant islands until over six hundred Japanese had gatherel to honour the memory of one who had once been, to their prejudiced eyes, a man to be despised and hated because of his religion; but whose intense earnestness to help them in every way in things both small and great, in matters of both

body and spirit, had through the years melted the blind prejudice, till they had come to see and respect the Christ spirit revealed in his quiet, persistent, self-sacrificing service.

"This very town of Setoda, which eighteen years ago agreed in council to refuse to let the Captain a house, or to have any dealings with the *Fukuin Maru*, to-day has its streets cleaned and repaired in preparation for the Memorial Service, and sends its mayor, its chief of police, and its principal of schools, with carefully written messages of sympathy and respect.

"Nor is it that I wish to write about the flowers, although they were most beautiful and abundant both at Kobe and at the Island service. At Kobe there are florists, and the wreaths, crosses, anchors, etc., were so many that the grave became a great mound of beautiful flowers; but in the Islands there are no florists and yet there was a still greater profusion of these marks of love and respect. Some had carefully been brought from the city, many had been beautifully and lovingly made of silk and fine materials, and some of the offerings were great artistic baskets of fruit.

"Again, it is not that I wish to write of the hundreds of messages of sympathy that came from all parts of the Empire and from all ranks of society, from friends known and unknown; messages from well-known men like Mr. Shimada of the Imperial Department of Communications, Dr. Nitobe and Mr. Uchimura Kango; messages of sorrow from unknown farmers and schoolboys and schoolgirls, who had come to know that they had a friend in Captain Bickel.

"The one thing I am eager to write about is, *The Spirit of the Funeral.*

"Of course a funeral is a place of mourning, but though at Captain Bickel's death I lost my closest and dearest personal friend, I came away from the services not mourning and despondent, but enthused, strength-

ened, inspired; and I found that to others came the same experience.

"It was not of our planning that the funeral services should have a certain tone, but somehow the Captain's death had so emphasized to us all the things he had taught and lived that instead of mourning his going we were roused by his burning spirit sounding a mighty call to us to follow, as he had followed in the Master's footsteps, in such earnest self-sacrificing service as must speedily win the world to Christ.

"The Japanese custom of interested friends saying a word at a funeral gave the opportunity for this call to come with special force, not so much from those who had been invited to make the funeral addresses, but as a spontaneous cry from the hearts of the ordinary Christians, who had been led, taught, influenced by intimate contact with him, in life and work.

"It was the triumph of his spirit over the incident of his death that made his funeral a call for volunteers for the firing-line; that put new enthusiasm for a life of self-sacrifice into every heart.

"It was not the eloquence of the funeral addresses, but the consciousness of the Captain's influence in their own hearts and lives that brought from the Island Christians such words as these:

" 'The Captain's death is to be the seed of a mighty revival in the Inland Sea.'

" 'The Captain's word to me was, not, See how much we have already done, but, Forward! Forward! Greater service! Greater victories!'

" 'Instead of the Captain's work being ended, there must soon be a thousand Captains in the Inland Sea; every Christian must be one.'

"The spirit of the services was the same both in Kobe and at Setoda, and it was so strong and genuine that Mrs. Bickel could not but thank God even through her tears, and we were led to recall what one Japanese

Christian quaintly wrote: 'Perhaps God will make Captain Bickel's death the greatest work of his life.'

"It is a striking proof of the spiritual greatness of Captain Bickel's life and character that at these funeral services, and continually, to those close to him in friendship and work, the consciousness of the lasting blessing that is ours in having known him as a friend and fellow-worker triumphs over the sense of loss."

In his memorial article on Captain Bickel in the *Japan Evangelist* for July, Mr. Briggs, after referring to the wide reach of Captain Bickel's influence as shown by the messages received from leading men in all walks of life, adds:

"Still more precious than all this was the revelation of the depth of his spiritual influence, by the members of the *Fukuin Maru* Church, at the funeral service at Setoda. The note of mourning was hardly to be heard at a service lasting five hours and in which perhaps fifty people took part.

"He had been so truly their *spiritual* leader that he was still leading them. Though serving them in ways innumerable, the spirit's call to spirit was in them all. His life had been inspiration, and his death but emphasized it. He had lived leading them in loving service and sacrifice, and he died pointing the way, and these simple hearts forgot to mourn in their eagerness to follow him, as he had followed Christ."

"He being dead yet speaketh."

XXV

AFTER-GLOW

"Perhaps the most striking testimony to the spiritual power of Captain Bickel is the threefold experience that his death seems to have brought to the wide circle of his friends and acquaintances, both Japanese and Foreign. First, sorrow for our great loss, then gratitude for having known such a character, and then a deep desire to live more earnest lives of sacrificial service. These are not lessons which some one draws from his life; they are real experiences forced into the heart that remembers Captain Bickel."—*Rev. F. C. Briggs.*

"HE being dead yet speaketh." The words possess an uncommon pertinence when applied to Captain Bickel.

Into what activities his glorified spirit has entered in the invisible world we need not conjecture. It will not be strange if many of his Island friends, with their religious conceptions coloured by the ideas of Shintoism, think of him as still closely connected with the Islands and the Island People, a sort of Patron Saint and Guardian Angel of the Isles of the Inner and Outer Seas. In Japan

the spirits of the dead are not thought of as far away from the scenes where they have lived. They are invisible but not absent. They have a share in the family life. They are a corporate part of the community. They work together with the living for the national welfare. In the day of battle the souls of those who have fallen in earlier wars mingle with the soldiers on the battle-field, inspiring them to nobler heroism. Doubtless in the thought of many of the simple-hearted Island villagers the tall foreign Captain whom they had learned to love and honour is still with them in his spiritual nature. He watches over the little Mission Vessel as she sails by reef and shoal; he hears the chantey of the Seven Sailors as they bring home the anchor; he encourages the Shepherds of the Isles as they labour for their flocks. Who shall say that behind these naive fancies there is no element of fact? One cannot imagine that ardent spirit, with its passion for service, fully content even amid the blessedness of the heavenly state unless a part of that felicity consisted in sharing the activities of the Divine Spirit on behalf of sinful men. And if personality and character and memory persist beyond the grave we know that the Island Folk will continue to share his love and interest. The request of the orphaned crew was not a vain desire, "Please love us yet, in the Heavenly Land."

Our dead shall live? There are no dead.
We yet shall meet them? Nay, they stand,
E'en when our bitterest prayers are said,
E'en when our hottest tears are shed,
Hard at our hand.

Our humble heartglow shineth yet
Through those wide glories they have won
Which set to shadow star or sun;
'Tis not in heaven that friends forget,
We hold them by love's blameless debt
And benison.

But whatever activities may occupy our Captain's glorified spirit, whether on behalf of his beloved Island Parish, or of the world-wide Kingdom, or of other worlds than this,—and the writer has no desire to be wise above what is written,—it is safe to predict that the memory and influence of the Captain's life will long persist. In this sense at least, his soul goes marching on, in the spiritual life and progress of Japan, and especially in that of the Inland Sea Mission.

Some idea of the abiding impression the Captain's life has made may be gained from the tone of the many Appreciations and Memorial Articles which appeared in the press after his death, both in American periodicals and in those issued in Japan. It would be possible to publish a large Memorial Volume composed exclusively of such articles.

Dr. Franklin, on behalf of the Board of the Missionary Society under whose direction Captain Bickel laboured, writes:

"Captain Bickel was a character of heroic proportions, in whom the highest ideals of missionary service were fulfilled to an extraordinary degree. His death means an incalculable loss. While his work was unique in several ways, his own personality, rather than the peculiar conditions under which he laboured, gave force

to his efforts. He was always the sturdy seaman, and able to command, but at the same time unostentatious and ready to serve the most lowly. He lived in closest fellowship with those to whom he ministered. 'To minister, and not to be ministered unto' was a passion of his life. In him were found the gifts and graces that make truly great missionaries, and which won for him the high place he held in the affection of missionaries of every denomination and in the confidence of Japanese of every class. Missionaries of all societies will feel that the Christian movement in Japan has sustained a great loss; government officials will consider that an influential factor in the promotion of international good-will has been removed; a multitude of the Japanese people on the Islands of the Inland Sea will be grief-stricken; many in America will join the Board of Managers of the Foreign Mission Society in personal sorrow."

As indicating the impression made by our Captain on his missionary fellow-workers may be quoted the editorial in *Gleanings*, the organ of the Baptist Missions in Japan, in the memorial number following the Captain's death:

"Our gallant Captain has cleared the Bar, and entered the Fair Haven of the Far Country.

"For nineteen years he engaged in a valiant fight against the powers of evil that darken this fair land. Literally he gave his life for the Island people of the Inland Sea, for 'he spared not his own life, but gave it freely' that he might make known to them the Way of Life Eternal.

"What his guerdon? To be accounted the disciple of the living Christ.

"What his decoration? The Cross of his Master ever borne about in his body.

"What his reward? A blessed company rescued from sin's darkness and despair, to shine as stars in his crown of rejoicing, through all eternity.

"What his monument in the land for which he died? His name written on the tablets of the hearts of the people who are working to establish a 'religion pure and undefiled' in their beloved country."

The editor of *Kyoho,* the Japanese Baptist Weekly, in the issue of May 24th, speaking in behalf of the Baptist ministers and churches of the mainland, writes as follows:

"Our Captain L. W. Bickel, who for many years as Captain of the Mission Ship, *Fukuin Maru,* has been engaged in the arduous labour of Island evangelization, a man burning with evangelistic zeal to the marrow of the bones of his powerful frame, fell asleep on the 11th day of May. We wish to humbly express to his wife and family, to the Christian workers connected with the *Fukuin Maru* Church, to all the brothers and sisters in the membership of that church, and to all the friends of the deceased, our heartfelt sympathy and condolence. Our Baptist Church has lost a model Evangelist, the Christian Church as a whole has lost a modern Apostle. Japan has lost a Father whose love for her and her people was greater than that of those born on her own soil. But surely the peoples of the Kingdom of God receive him in his glorified being with songs of welcome!"

From among a number of tributes of appreciation from representatives of various Christian organizations in Japan that of Mr. Galen Fisher, American Secretary in Tokyo of the Japanese Y. M. C. A., may be quoted as reflecting the uni-

versal sentiment of the missionary body. Mr. Fisher writes:

"Captain Bickel awakened in me strong admiration and confidence, although I had only three or four chances to meet him intimately. I honoured his fearless devotion to his own convictions, matched by his knightly courtesy toward those who differed with him; his intense sense of the urgency of bringing the Gospel to men, balanced by a rare common sense and humour and tact.

"His Inland Sea work was far more than a picturesque novelty; it presented one of the finest examples in missionary annals of a strong leader so merging his personality with his native colleagues as to make common men rise clear beyond themselves, and display a loyalty and unity and passion for souls akin to his own. I join with many others in thanking God for his character and work."

One of the most interesting memorial articles published in the *Kyoho* is from the pen of one of the present Shepherds of the Isles, Pastor Shibata, Bishop of the Open Sea Islands. He tells us how he came to be associated with the Captain, and what impression was made on his mind by ten years of fellowship with the Captain in Christian work:

"Immediately on arriving at Arima I went to the Sugimoto Hotel, and there for the first time I met Captain Bickel." (The Captain was attending the Annual Mission Conference, and had sent request by telegraph to Mr. Shibata to meet him there.) "He said little, but with his own big hand warmly clasping mine, and speaking in a wonderfully kind and humble manner, he invited me to take a part in the Island work. 'Do please come,' he urged. I felt truly unworthy such a reception.

"I conceived at once a strong conviction that here was no ordinary missionary, and the desire awoke to become a companion in Christian work with a man so ardent, so loving and so noble. I at once formed my decision and began my labours as an evangelist among the Islands. Thenceforward, during ten years, he patiently bore with my inefficiency and the shallowness of my nature, bestowing on me his loving companionship. With him, missionary and helper were on the same footing, and from the very first he made no difference between me and those who had for a considerable time been associated with him. As a father with a son, or as an elder brother with a younger, he discussed every matter with me frankly, whether great or small. Truly it was of his wide heart, wide as the sea is wide, that he counted me worthy a share in his vast enterprise, overlooking my failings and making the most of what in me was good. While I owe this privilege of a share in that undertaking to the goodness of God, I feel that I owe it also to the Captain's profound love; and for this I lack words to express my gratitude.

"No one once caught on the hook of the Captain's loving kindness could escape. Such might has the love whose source is in God. At one's first meeting with him, indeed, he appeared of a somewhat fierce countenance. His manner, too, was abrupt; he did not spend time on every-day conversation, but came at once to the business in hand. This was sometimes rather embarrassing, to be sure. But once he came to know and trust a man he never forsook him nor forgot him.

"He was unwilling to leave any duty half done, but pushed everything to a finish, regardless of difficulty. No matter how others might seek to dissuade, his ardent love cried, 'Whatever is possible, let me do!' How many have been caught on this hook of love and saved, I know not.

"All who had any acquaintance with Captain Bickel,

Pastors Ito and Shibata with group of Christians and enquirers at Hirado, Hirado Shima

and especially his associates in the work, were profoundly impressed by his strenuous activity. He was extremely careful, it is true, about matters of hygiene, especially of diet, and frequently counselled us also in such lines, urging us to allow ourselves plenty of food and sleep, when this was possible. This advice was not only prompted by kindness, but also, I believe, by the wish that we might be thoroughly prepared for the work ahead. When the time for action came he would labour day after day, without sign of fatigue, from morning till late at night. And however brief the time left for sleep when he finally sought his berth, his mind continued to keep the run of things on the ship, and he would next day remind the sailors that during a certain watch the ship's bell had been struck so many minutes late. Thanks to this attention to minute details he navigated the vessel twenty years without disaster. Even professional navigators were deeply impressed by his thoroughness.

"In the evangelistic work, what with making preparation for places of meeting, making outlines of the addresses, selecting the lantern slides, and other such duties, he frequently denied himself even time to eat. We weaker ones, too, spurred on by such zeal, laboured each in his own district, and found constant success in our work.

"But even in his busiest times the Captain did not forget to pray. There might be no uttered words, but with silent prayer he went forward with his task. This one might call the prayer of activity." At this point Mr. Shibata, by way of an illustration of the Captain's arduous life, describes in detail the activities of two days and nights spent at the Iki group, during the Captain's last visit to the Deep Sea Islands; and then concludes his article as follows:

"Ah, well, never again shall I witness that ardent enthusiasm to serve God and man with body and spirit,

by reason of which, even after days of strenuous toil, and while he stood on the bridge directing the vessel's course, his heart was still filled with concern for the salvation of individual souls, or with plans for the development of the work of his mission."

In the *Kyoho* of May 24th is a long article entitled, "A Sorrowful Journey." The writer, who uses a *nom de plume,* is evidently a Christian man of education and culture, and a warm friend of Captain Bickel. His home is in Tokyo and in his narrative he takes us with him to Kobe, describes the funeral services held there, and brings us back with him to the Capital. The very prolixity of the article reveals the profound impression made on his mind by the Captain's death, and scattered through it are passages which illustrate the influence which the Captain exerted, and continues to exert, over the hearts of many outside the Island communities. Speaking of the journey to Kobe he says:

"Through the car windows the lights gleamed on the falling rain, and we experienced that feeling of melancholy which a spring night inspires. Presently my companion took from his valise Rokwa's 'In the Shadow of Death,' and I from mine Tagore's 'The Gardener.'

"'The Wise Man warns us that Life is but a dew-drop on the lotus leaf.'
"'None lives forever, Brother, and nothing lasts for long.'
"'Life droops toward its sunset, to be drowned in the golden shadows.'

"These lines alone remained strangely echoing through my mind. At the same time the Captain's

image came floating before me, and my other self, which refused to accept the fact of his death, took possession of me. 'That powerful frame,' I mused, 'those piercing but kindly blue eyes, that prominent nose, that firm mouth, have they returned to the clay, to be seen no more? Shall I hear never more his earnest words of counsel or reproof? Nay, 'tis false! The Captain is not dead!'

"This sorrowful journey has meant much more to me than any pleasant trip could have meant. 'Blessèd are those that weep now!' Some one says, 'Heaven is high. The prudent man gazes upon the earth.' Moses has ascended to heaven. I lay down my pen with the earnest hope that Joshua may appear."

Thine is the night. The grave
May cast its shade
Where the Dear Dead are laid.
All unafraid
We lean upon Thy Promise, Strong to Save!
To hearts forlorn
Thou gavest the Easter Morn.
Death's murk shall stars afford.
Thine is the Night, O Lord.

XXVI

THE VICTORY OF LOVE

THE tributes of affection and appreciation which were laid, with the spring blossoms, upon the Captain's casket, and of which a few of the most striking have been copied into the preceding chapter, together with the deep feeling shown at the time of the funeral and memorial services, both by the many hundreds assembled and by a host of others who could not be present in person, are in themselves sufficient evidence of the large place which he had won for himself in a great multitude of human hearts, and in gaining for himself had gained also for his Message, and for his Lord, whose Spirit wrought within him.

If one shall ask what is the secret of the Captain's influence, it may be answered that several elements enter into it. We have had passing glimpses of these in the course of our story, but they will repay a more careful and extended consideration.

Missionary Briggs, speaking from a long and close acquaintance with Captain Bickel and the Inland Sea Mission, said, a few years ago, after referring to the charm of the Little White Ship, the winsome personality of her Skipper, and the attractiveness of his Message:

"I have seen the work intimately and thought

much about it, and the human elements that seem to me to weigh most in the bringing of this success are, first, the Captain's deep practical faith that he is called to the work by the Master and therefore it cannot fail; next, an enthusiasm in and for the work that keeps him everlastingly at it; next, his intense conviction that true service must cost: this underlies even the minor details of the work, nothing is too small to take pains with. Another factor is the Captain's definite faith in the Bible. His teaching is not modified to weakness by modern doubts, but with insistent force he presents the foundation truths of salvation in the simplest forms. This clear-cut faith, backed by a forceful personality, makes for a definiteness in aim and methods among all the workers, and a resulting enthusiasm and oneness."

To this the present writer wishes to add some thoughts based on his own less intimate knowledge of the Island work.

Captain Bickel was a man of marked natural ability. Tall and strong was he, able to take heavy burdens on his broad shoulders. Swift and sure was he in thought and movement, sound in judgment, tireless in effort, a man to bring things to pass. As a sailor he speedily rose to the highest positions in the mercantile marine. As a business man he excelled as organizer and administrator. As a missionary pioneer he had sagacity to lay his plans wide and long, and strength and courage to push them toward fulfillment. When problems of mission policy were to be solved none surpassed him in keenness of analysis and in practical wisdom. In our Annual Conferences, or in the ses-

sions of our Reference Committee, his modestly and thoughtfully expressed opinions were of the utmost value. He was a master of the art of speech, and his occasional writings and addresses were eagerly welcomed for the raciness and aptness of his language, and the freshness and vigour of his thought. His style is quite inimitable: fresh, breezy, with a tang like that of a wind from the salt sea. Amid the rather prosy accounts of regular station work in our Japan Baptist Annual the *Fukuin Maru* reports are like streams sparkling in a desert. The "*Log of the Fukuin Maru*" has the hall-mark of real literature. The papers read by him before large missionary gatherings, at Karuizawa and in Tokyo, upon such topics as country evangelization and moral conditions in Rural Japan were acknowledged to be masterpieces. Whether as captain of an ocean liner, administrator of a big business, pioneer of a great movement, or in the field of literature, he was fitted to achieve success. He was a strong man, as men count strength, winning from all responsive souls that instant admiration and confidence which a man of real power naturally inspires. The word hero is a great word, and greatly overworked, but in our Captain we realized that we had a true hero, strong to labour and to suffer, facing dangers and enemies with a smiling courage, meeting insult and injustice with a serene patience, ready to grapple with difficult situations, and to "carry on" in a forlorn hope. None of our gallant soldier lads enduring the hardships of a winter campaign in the trenches of Flanders, or facing death "somewhere in France," can boast a finer heroism than

that our Captain showed when with a body weakened with disease and racked with pain, he set his teeth together and fought his way through the gales of winter and the hostilities of men toward the goal which God had set before him.

Captain Bickel was a man of deep piety, and the fountains of his strength were in the Almighty. One could not be in his company without realizing that he was a man of God. Sane and practical, and with a saving sense of humour, there was nothing akin to ostentation in his religious life, no taint of asceticism or fanaticism, no morbid aloofness from the wholesome interests of life. But he walked with God, and to him God was an inseparable Friend and Helper. Not always able, amid his crowding duties, to observe times and places for secret prayer, he lifted his heart to God as he tramped the granite hills or stood on the bridge of his little vessel. His favourite oratory was the *Fukuin Maru's* quarter-deck, and there, under the stars or under the blue heaven, he held communion with Him who is invisible, and won new wisdom and strength for his arduous task.

Captain Bickel was genuinely humble, as is the way with the spiritually strong. Humility is own sister to piety, and in the presence of God one learns not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. While aware of the importance of the task to which he had been called, and confident that he had been divinely guided in the methods he had adopted, he also appreciated fully the devotion and ability of his fellow-missionaries, and the value of their work to the Kingdom as a whole. He often hesitated to urge upon the Mission, or

the Home Board, the needs of his own field, lest the resources at the disposal of others should be depleted. In his daily life he could "condescend to men of low estate," meeting the most lowly as friends and brothers, but it never occurred to him that it was a "condescension." He lived close to Him who was meek and lowly in heart. He was a true *noble*man, a real *gentle*man, knightly, courteous, chivalrous. Though a loyal American, he was still more a citizen of the world, with that cosmopolitan vision, that true Christian democratic spirit, which recognizes the value and dignity of human nature, regardless of race, colour or outward condition. The simple-minded Island villagers found that there was no middle wall of partition between him and them, and that he could be as frankly intimate with the humblest farmer and fisherman as with those who sat in the seats of the mighty.

Above all, Captain Bickel's work was done with a heart of love. His strength was not like that of the Super-man, who is strong for himself, but like that of the God-man,

"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love,"

who is strong for others. There was with his strength a wonderful gentleness and tenderness. He was conspicuous for his kindly spirit and thoughtfulness for others. The distressed, the despised, the weak, the poor, the widow and the orphan—of all such he made the cause his own. If one needed a helping hand, literally or figuratively, his was instantly outstretched. Whether in his relations with his fellow-missionaries, or with

his Japanese associates, or with the Islanders of his wide parish, he was invariably, spontaneously, sympathetic and helpful. He came to be "friend, philosopher and guide" to thousands of people who brought to him their troubles and perplexities. He was in Japan not to be ministered to but to minister. He went about doing good. His life radiated kindness as a lamp radiates light.

Such kindness and sympathy was a new phenomenon to the Island Folk. It was a revelation to them of the spirit of Christianity, of the heart of Christ. He

"Whose smile was love by Galilee"

manifested Himself on the Island shores in the person of this apostle, in the warm tones of his voice, in the earnest kindness of his gaze, in a daily ministry to all who were in trouble. They had never known, nor imagined, love after this fashion.

When Jesus was about to send Peter forth upon his ministry He made the examination for ordination very brief. There was but one question, and it was three times put: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" The first requisite for a successful ministry is Love. The second requisite is Love. The third requisite is Love. Everything else is the hands or tools with which Love works. At the heart of the work of the *Fukuin Maru* has been a deep and constant love—love first of all for the loving Christ, and with that a love for lost and erring men for whom He died. So long as the world stands Love is Conqueror. Love, and only love, wins love, and where love is won all is won. The method of the Gospel, the strategy of the

Cross, is psychologically correct. The *Fukuin Maru* Mission has been, all things considered, amazingly successful, and the secret of that success has not been chiefly the charm of the white Gospel Ship; nor the sagacity, energy and enthusiasm with which the work has been prosecuted; nor the commanding personality of the leader; nor even the winsomeness of the Message put into the language of the lips, but the love which has been behind and within all. It is the love of Christ, glowing through the heart of the Captain, and showing in all the work of the vessel, that has won the love of the Islanders, and with that the Islanders themselves. They have seen in the Captain, and in the Shepherds of the Isles who have caught his spirit, what love is in the Christian sense, and that is leading them on to a comprehension of the love of God.

Captain Bickel has not lived in vain, nor has he died in vain. Such lives and such deaths as his are precious in the sight of the Lord. They who live the life of love, and through love lay down their lives, shall surely, like the Lord of Love Himself, who loved us and gave Himself for us, see of the travail of their souls and be satisfied.

For all the Day, O God,
We give Thee praise,
Blessing and laud always,
Glad with Thy Gaze,
How rough soe'er the roads our feet have trod.
For night and peace
Eve's hush and Death's release,
And Endless Day restored,
We give Thee praise, O Lord.

NOTE—It may be of interest to those who have followed the story of Captain Bickel and his White Ship to know how the work among the Islands has been cared for since his death, and what are the plans for the future.

During the summer of 1917 a Japanese captain was employed to navigate the vessel, and Mr. and Mrs. Briggs, of Himeji, were entrusted with the evangelistic side of the work. In the fall, however, Mr. Briggs fell ill, and was obliged to lay down the work and return to America. He died soon after reaching San Francisco. St. Francis of Himeji, his missionary friends called him, and the Japanese speak of him as the Sage of Bantan, that is, of the two provinces of Harima and Tamba in which he laboured.

Since the autumn of 1917 the evangelistic work among the Islands has been carried on in a somewhat broken way, missionaries and Japanese preachers from the mainland giving a few weeks' help each to the Shepherds of the Isles. The Japanese Captain has been replaced by our Captain's son Philip, so that the *Fukuin Maru* has again her Captain Bickel.

Recently Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. Steadman, of Morioka, Japan, who have had many years of experience in evangelistic missionary work in Korea and Japan, have been appointed to take charge of the evangelistic work of the vessel. They are to take up their new duties in the autumn of the present year.

September, 1918.

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